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ESSAYS

ON THE

CHARACTERISTICS.

BY
JOHN BROWN, M. A.



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ESSAYS
ON THE
CHARACTERISTICS
OF THE
Earl of SHAFTESBURY.

- I. On RIDICULE considered as a Test
of Truth.
- II. On the Obligations of Man to Virtue, and
the Necessity of *religious Principle*.
- III. On *revealed* RELIGION, and CHRISTI-
ANITY.

ESSAYS

CHARACTERISTICS

OF THE

I. OF THE

II. OF THE

III. OF THE

T O

Ralph Allen, Esq.

S I R,

D ID this Address aim no farther than at the common End of Dedicators, I should have been proud enough to have declined the Trouble, and *You* too wise to have approved this public Manner of offering it.

To praise *You*, were *impertinent*; and to tell others of my Obligations to *You*, would have the Appearance rather of *Vanity* than *Gratitude*.

THE

THE Truth is ; I make free with Your Name on this Occasion, not so much to *protect* my *Book*, as to *complete* my *Argument*.

I HAVE ventured to criticize the Works of a very celebrated Writer, who took it into his Head to oppose the solid Wisdom of the *Gospel*, by the Visions of *false Philosophy*. As His, at best, is but the Cause of *Wit* and *Eloquence*, all the Support he could give it was only to tell us *how* PLATO wrote: Mine being that of *Truth*, and *Christianity*, I have the Advantage of *realizing* all I say, in bidding the World take Notice *how* YOU live.

IN

IN a Word ; I was willing to bring the Question to a short Issue ; and shew, by a *known* EXAMPLE, to what an Elevation true *Christianity* can exalt human Nature. Till therefore philosophic *Taste* can produce a parallel Effect, *Religion* must bear the *Palm* ; and CHRISTIANITY, like her *Parent* WISDOM, *will be justified of her Children.*

I am, S I R,

Your most obliged,

humble Servant,

JOHN BROWN.

In a Word; I am willing
to bring the Question to a short
Issue; and I am ready to leave
it on the Conscience of the
Reader. I am, Sir, your
philosophic Son, and
a humble Servant,
J. H. P.
CHRISTIANITY, like
the Sun, is
of the same
Nature.

Jan 21 1792

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CONTENTS.

ESSAY I.

*On RIDICULE considered as a Test
of Truth.*

SECT.

I. *VINDICATION of the noble
Writer's Zeal for Freedom.*

page 1.

II. *Of his Method of treating the Question
concerning Ridicule.*

p. 7.

III. *Of the different Kinds of Composition;
Poetry, Eloquence, and Argument.*

p. 12.

IV. *That Ridicule is a Species of Elo-
quence.*

p. 41.

V. *A Confirmation of the foregoing Truths
by an Appeal to Fact.*

p. 48.

VI. *Of the noble Writer's Arguments in
support of his new Theory; particu-
larly the Case of SOCRATES.*

p. 54.

a

VII. *His*

vi C O N T E N T S.

SECT.

- VII. *His further Reasonings examined.*
page 64.
- VIII. *Of his main Argument; relating to
Protestantism and Christianity.*
p. 74.
- IX. *Of the Opinion of GORGIAS quoted by
his Lordship from ARISTOTLE.*
p. 80.
- X. *The Reasoning of one of his Followers
in this Subject, examined.* p. 88.
- XI. *Of the particular Impropriety of ap-
plying Ridicule to the Investigation
of religious Truth.* p. 99.

E S S A Y II.

*On the Obligations of Man to Virtue,
and the Necessity of Religious
Principle.*

SECT.

- I. *Introduction.* page 109.
- II. *That the Definitions which Lord
SHAFTESBURY, and several other
Moralists have given of Virtue, is
inadequate and defective.* p. 111.
- III. *Of the real Nature of Virtue.* p. 123.
- IV. *Of*

C O N T E N T S. vii

SECT.

- IV. *Of an Objection urged by Dr. MANDEVILLE against the permanent Reality of Virtue.* page 137.
- V. *Examination and Analysis of The Fable of the Bees.* p. 146.
- VI. *Of the natural Motives to virtuous Action.* p. 158.
- VII. *How far these Motives can in Reality influence all Mankind. The Errors of the Stoic and Epicurean Parties; and the most probable Foundation of these Errors.* p. 168.
- VIII. *The noble Writer's additional Reasonings examined; and shewn to be without Foundation.* p. 187.
- IX. *That the religious Principle, or Obedience to the Will of God, can alone produce a uniform and permanent Obligation to Virtue. The noble Writer's Objections examined.* p. 206.
- X. *Of the Efficacy of the religious Principle. Conclusion.* p. 223.

viii CONTENTS.

ESSAY III.

*On revealed RELIGION, and
CHRISTIANITY.*

SECT.

- I. *Of the noble Writer's Manner of treating Christianity.* page 241.
- II. *Of his Objections to the Truths of natural Religion.* p. 245.
- III. *Of the Credibility of the Gospel-History.* p. 256.
- IV. *Of the Scripture-Miracles.* p. 271.
- V. *Of Enthusiasm.* p. 292.
- VI. *Of the religious and moral Doctrines of Christianity.* p. 312.
- VII. *Of several detached Passages in the Characteristics.* p. 347.
- VIII. *Of the Style and Composition of the Scriptures.* p. 369.
- IX. *Of the noble Writer's Treatment of the English Clergy.* p. 389.



ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY I.

On Ridicule, considered as a Test
of Truth.

SECTION I.

IT hath been the Fate of Lord SHAFTES-
BURY's *Characteristics*, beyond that of
most other Books, to be idolized by one
Party, and detested by another. While
the first regard it as a Work of *perfect Ex-*
cellence, as containing every Thing that can
render Mankind wise and happy; the lat-
ter are disposed to rank it among the most
pernicious of Writings, and brand it as one
B
S E C T. I.
—
conti-

SECT continued Heap of *Fustian*, *Scurrility*, and
 I. *Falseness*.

THIS Circumstance hath always appeared to me a Demonstration, that Passion and Prejudice have had a greater Share than Reason, in deciding upon the Merits of this Work; which many read with Displeasure, more with Admiration, but few with impartial Judgment. 'Tis probable, the Truth lies between the two Extremes of these discordant Opinions: and that the noble Writer hath mingled Beauties and Blots, Faults and Excellencies, with a liberal and unsparing Hand.

THESE, so far as they relate to *Religion* and *Morals*, it is my present Intention to point out, without Regard to the bigoted Censures of his Friends or Enemies: While I foresee, that some will *frown* upon me for allowing him any Thing, and others treat me with a *contemptuous Smile* for presuming to differ with him at all.

THE first Thing that occurs to an unprejudiced Mind, in the Perusal of the *Characteristics*, is that generous Spirit of *Freedom* which shines throughout the whole. The noble Author every where asserts that natural Privilege of Man, which hath been

Essay on RIDICULE.

3

so often denied him, of seeing with his own SECT.
Eyes, and judging by his own Reason. It I.
may possibly appear strange to some, why
he should so extremely labour a Point so
plain. But in Justice to his Lordship these
Gentlemen must remember, or be informed,
that in former Times, some well-designing
Men among ourselves, from a groundless
Dread of an unlimited Freedom of the
Press, attempted to make a most unnatural
and cruel Separation between *Truth* and
Liberty. Having shaken off the Corrup-
tions of *Popery*, and established what they
thought a pure and perfect System, they un-
happily stopped short in their full Carrier of
Glory; preposterously attempting to deprive
others of that common Privilege which they
had so nobly exercised themselves. This
mistaken Spirit seemed entirely subdued by
the excellent LOCKE, and others, about the
Time of the Revolution: But at the Period
when our noble Author wrote, it not only
revived, but was heightened by a terrible
Accession of Bitterness and Rancour. Hence
those frequent Sallies of Invective, which he
throws out against this intolerant Principle,
which he justly stigmatizeth as equally im-
politic, irrational, and unchristian.

SECT.

I.

'Tis the Glory of our Days, that this accursed Spirit of Persecution is at least dying away. What Pity that we cannot add, it is wholly extinguished! It is true, we most of us profess ourselves Friends to a Freedom of Inquiry, *in the Main*. But why, *in the Main*? Why that needless Circumstance of Hesitation? Would we embrace Error? Or do we think that Truth can suffer by the most rigid Scrutiny? On the contrary, not only the Perfection, but the very Being of Knowledge depends on the Exercise of Freedom. For whatever some may fear from an open and unlimited Enquiry, it seems evidently the only Means vouchsafed us for the Attainment of Truth. The *Abuse* of it may be *hurtful*, but the *Want* of it is *fatal*. Such, indeed, are the clear and undoubted Principles of our Religion: Neither sure can these Declarations surprize us. For if human and political Establishments had been sacred or unviolable, where had been our *Protestantism*; nay, where our *Christianity*? Dare we then to desert or discountenance a Principle, on which not only the Purity, but the very Existence of our Religion depends? Nor is this Principle less consonant with the strictest Reason. It

is

Essay on RIDICULE.

5

is Falsehood only that loves and retires into Darkneſs. Truth delights in the Day; and demands no more than a juſt Light, to appear in perfect Beauty. A rigid Examination is its only Teſt: For Experience hath taught us, that even *Obſtinacy* and *Error* can endure the *Fires* of Perſecution: But it is genuine Truth, and that alone, which comes out pure and *unchanged* from the *ſeverer Tortures* of Debate.

SECT.
I.

IT will ever be our trueſt Praise therefore, to join the noble Apologiſt in his Encomiums on *Freedom*; the only permanent Baſis on which *Religion* or *Virtue* can be eſtabliſhed. Nor can we leſs approve his frequent Recommendations of *Politenefs*, *Chearfulneſs*, and *Good-humour*, in the Proſecution of our moſt important Enquiries. The moroſe, contemptuous, and ſurly Species of Compoſition is generally an Appendage to Bigotry, as appears in Inſtances innumerable, both among the miſtaken Friends and Enemies of Religion. On the contrary, the amiable Qualities of Chearfulneſs and Good-humour, caſt a Kind of Sunſhine over a Compoſition, and naturally engage us in Favour of the Writer. They reſemble that gentle Smile that often lights

SECT. I. up the human Countenance, the never-failing Indication of a humane Temper. How naturally then must we be disposed to listen; how open our Minds to receive Conviction, when we perceive our Opponent's Intention is benevolent: When we perceive that his Aim is not *Victory*, but *Information*: that he means not to *insult*, but to *instruct* us.

So far, out of an unfeigned Regard to Truth, it should be my Boast to take Party with the noble Writer: On the same Principle it will now be necessary to depart from him. For, not content with establishing the free Exercise of Reason, and the Way of Chearfulness, in treating the Subjects of Religion and Morals; he revolts from the Principle on which the rational Advocates for Religion were willing to have joined him, and appeals to a new Test, *the Test of Ridicule*. This, in his two first Treatises, he attempts to establish as a surer Method of Conviction: And *that* Ridicule, which had hitherto been employed in *disgracing known Falsehood*, he informs us, may be successfully applied to the *Investigation of unknown Truth*.

HE

Essay on RIDICULE.

7

HE hath gained a numerous Train of SECT.
Followers in this new Opinion: It may be I.
therefore necessary to examine its Foundations.

SECTION II.

'TIS great Pity the noble Author hath SECT.
not condescended to a little more *Precision* II.
in treating the Question now before us. He indulges the Gaiety of Spirit, the Freedom of *Wit* and *Humour* so far, that a Reader, who seeks Information rather than Amusement, is often at a Loss to know where his Argument, or even his Opinion, lies. This, no doubt, was in Part owing to a generous Abhorrence of *Pedantry*, which he takes all Occasions of exposing to Contempt. Yet a better Reason may possibly be alledged: For in recommending and enforcing the *Use of Ridicule*, what could be more natural and proper than the *Power of Ridicule* itself? To draw a striking Picture of demure Folly and solemn Imposture, was a Masterpiece of Prudence: But to have argued *seriously*, would have destroyed his Argument: It would have been a tacit Confession, that there is a deeper Foundation, on which

SECT. II. Ridicule itself must rest, he must therefore have overturned, even while he intended to establish this new Pillar, and *Ground of Truth.*

HERE then we discover why the noble Author is so witty in Defence of Wit, and chuses to maintain the Cause of Raillery by Raillery itself. He smiles at his Adversary, who had attempted to find Coherence in his first Letter^a. He glories in being an Adventurer in the Way of *Miscellany*; where "Cuttings and Shreds of Learning, "with various Fragments and Points of "Wit, are drawn together and tacked in "any fantastic Form. Where the Wild "and Whimsical, under the Name of the "Odd and Pretty, succeed in the Room of "the Graceful and Beautiful: Where Justness and Accuracy of Thought are set "aside, as too constraining, and of too "painful an Aspect, to be endured in the "agreeable and more easy Commerce of "Gallantry and modern Wit^b." Hence with Reason he proceeds to his Conclusion, that "Grounds and Foundations are of no "Moment, in a Kind of Work, which, ac-

^a Vol. iii. p. 18, 20.

^b Ibid. p. 5, &c.

" cording

“ cording to modern Establishment, has pro- S E C T.
II.
“ perly neither *Top* nor *Bottom*, *Beginning* _____
“ nor *End*.”

IT must be confessed, that in the Conduct of the literary Warfare, they who depend on the Regularity and Force of *Arguments*, have but a sorry Chance against these nimble Adventurers in the *Sallies* of Wit and Ridicule; these *Hussars* in Disputation, who confide more in their Agility, than Strength or Discipline; and by sudden *Evolutions* and timely *Skulking*, can do great Mischiefs, without receiving any. Ill qualified, indeed, is the *saturnine* Complexion of the dry *Reasoner*, to cope with this *mercurial* Spirit of modern *Wit*: The Formalist is under a double Difficulty; not only to *conquer* his Enemy, but to *find* him. Though it must be owned, the Search is a harder Task than the *Victory*; and more mortifying, as it ends in shewing us that this redoubted Figure of *Ridicule*, armed at all Points like *Reason*, is no other than an airy Phantom, tricked up by the Goddess of Folly, to confound formal Wisdom; as that other in the Poet, to mislead his Hero:

‘ Vol. iii. p. 8.

Tum

SECT. Tum dea nube cava *tenuem sine viribus umbram*
 II. In faciem Æneæ (visu mirabile monstrum)

Dardaniis ornat telis : clypeumque, jubaſque
Divini aſſimilat capitis ; dat inania verba,
Dat ſine mente ſonum, greſſuſque effingit euntis.
 Illum autem abſentem Æneas in prælia poſcit.
 Tunc leviſ haud ultra *latebras* jam *quærit* imago,
 Sed ſublime volans, *nubi ſe immiſcuit atræ*^d.

SINCE, therefore, the noble Writer declines treating this Subject in the Way of cloſe Argument ; we muſt take our Chance with him upon the Terms he hath been pleaſed to preſcribe. We muſt be content to go a *Gleaning* for his Opinions, and *pick them up* as they lie thinly ſcattered through a wide Extent of Pages.

BUT, however, his Lordſhip's high Quality may exempt him from the eſtabliſhed Forms of Argument, it were the Height of Imprudence in Writers of inferior Rank, to attempt an Imitation of his peculiar Manner. His delicate Raillery, therefore, will beſt be repayed by ſober Reaſoning. This, ſure, his moſt zealous Admirers cannot take amiſs: It is the noble Author's allowed Maxim, that "a Jeſt which will not bear a " ſerious Examination is certainly falſe " Wit^e." Neither was he a Stranger to

^d Virg. Æn. x. v 636, &c. ^e Vol. i. p. 74.

Essay on RIDICULE.

II

the methodical Species of Composition: As SECT.
II.
appears from that fine Chain of moral Reasoning which connects his Enquiry concerning Virtue: Where he proceeds through the Work with a Pace equally regular and majestic. Indeed should we form our Idea of him from the Attitudes in which his sorry Mimics present him to our View, we should see him labouring through a confused Mass of Words and random Half-meanings, entangled in his own Argument, and throwing himself into every unnatural and awkward Posture, to make his Way, though in vain, into common Sense. But this is a very bad Picture of our noble Author: Though it be all his affected Admirers can exhibit of him in their own Productions. Deformities are easily copied: True Features and graceful Attitudes are caught by the Hand of a *Master* only. For in Reality, none ever knew the Value of Order and Proportion better than Lord SHAFTESBURY. He knew that Confusion can only tend to *disgrace* Truth, or *disguise* Falsehood. Method, indeed, may degenerate into Stiffness, but to despise Order, is the silliest *Affectation*. Especially when the slovenly and confused Form of the Composition

SECT. II. position (if it may be properly said to have any) pretends to the Character of *Elegance*, it becomes of all others the grossest and most contemptible *Pedantry*.

SECTION III.

SECT. III. THE divine Author of our Being having given us several different Powers, *Sense*, *Imagination*, *Memory*, and *Reason*, as the Inlets, Preservers, and Improvers of Knowledge; it may be proper here briefly to remark their respective Provinces. As the *Senses* are the Fountains whence we derive all our Ideas; so these are infinitely combined and associated by the *Imagination*: *Memory* preserves these Assemblages of Things: *Reason* compares, distinguishes, and separates them: By this Means determining their Differences, and pointing out which are *real*, and which *fictional*.

THE *Passions* are no more than the several Modes of Pleasure and Pain, to which the Author of Nature hath wisely subjected us, for our own and each others Preservation.

“ Love, Hope, and Joy, fair Pleasure’s smiling

“ Train;

“ Hate, Fear, and Grief, the Family of Pain.

To

To these we may add two more of a mixed S E C T.
III.
Kind, *Pity* and *Contempt*, which seem to partake of both Pain and Pleasure.

As the *Senses* and *Imagination* are the Sources of all our Ideas, it follows that they are the Sources of all our Modes of Pleasure and Pain: That is, of all our *Passions*. Nor is any Passion *strongly excited* in the Soul by mere Knowledge only, till the *Imagination* hath formed to itself some Kind of *Picture* or *Representation* of the Good or Evil apprehended. Thus ARISTOTLE justly defines Fear to be a Kind of Pain arising from the *Phantasy* or *Appearance* of future Evil^f. Consistently with this, he again truly observes, that though all Men know they must die, yet, while *Death* is at a Distance, they never think of it^g. The same may be observed concerning the Belief of *future Existence*; which never sways the Conduct of Mankind, till the *Imagination* is strongly *impressed* by steady and repeated Contemplation.

^f Εστω δε φόβος, λυπη τις η ταραχη εκ ΦΑΝΤΑΣΙΑΣ μελλοντος κακου. Arist. Rhet. l. ii. c. 5.

^g Ισασι γαρ παντες, οτι αποθανουνται· αλλ' οτι ουκ εγγυς, ουδεν φροντιζουσιν. Ib. l. ii. c. 5.

As

SECT.
III.

As therefore it appears to be the Province of *Sense* and *Imagination* to present and associate Ideas, but not to mark their real Differences; and as the Passions are always excited according to the Suggestions of these two powers; it follows, that *apparent*, not *real* Good and Evil are universally the Objects of all our Passions. Thus the respective Objects of Joy, Fear, Anger, are apparent Good, apparent Danger, apparent Injury. Universally, whether the Object be real or fictitious, while it is *apparent* (that is, while the Imagination represents it as *real*) it will produce its relative Passion.

It is the Province of *Reason* alone, to correct the Passions. Imagination and Passion can never correct themselves. Every Assemblage of Ideas, every Impression made upon them, hath an Object *apparently real*: Therefore without the Aids of *Reason*, the *active* and *separating* Power, the Mind can never distinguish *real* from *fictitious* Objects. And as it is the Province of Reason only, thus to regulate the Senses and Imagination, and to determine when they impress a Truth, or suggest a Falsehood: so it is no less the Province of the same corrective Power, to deter-

determine concerning the Modes of *apparent* Good and Evil, and thus to fix both our *Opinions* and *Passions* on their proper Objects^h.

SECT.
III.

UPON this just Dependence of Imagination and Passion on the superior and leading Faculty of Reason, the whole Weight of this Question concerning the Application and Use of *Ridicule* depends. But that we may obtain as wide a View as possible of our Subject, it may be proper to ascertain the Nature, Limits, and Ends of the different Kinds of literary Composition, which take their Rise from these three different Powers, as they subsist in Man. Thus we shall discover, to which of them *the Way of Ridicule* is to be referred, and determine how far

^h Some of these Truths are both finely and philosophically expressed by our great Poet in the following Passage:

But know, that in the Soul
Are many lesser Faculties, that serve
Reason as chief: Among these, Fancy next
Her Office holds: Of all external Things
Which the five watchful Senses represent,
She forms Imaginations, aery Shapes,
Which Reason joining or dis-joining, frames
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
Our Knowledge, or Opinion.

Parad. Lost, B. v. ♪ 100, &c.

it

SECT. it *may*, or *may not*, with Propriety be re-
 III. garded as a *Test of Truth*.

PERHAPS there is no Species of Writing (except only that of mere *Narration*) but what will fall under the Denomination of *Poetry*, *Eloquence*, or *Argument*. The first lays hold of the Imagination; the second, through the Imagination, seizes the Passions; the last addresseth itself to the Reason of Mankind. The immediate, *essential* End therefore of Poetry is to *please*, of Eloquence to *persuade*, of Argument to *instruct*. To this End, the Poet dwells on such Images as are *beautiful*; the Orator selects every Circumstance that is *affecting*; the Philosopher only admits what is *true*. But as all these, in their several Kinds of Writing, address themselves to *Man*, who is compounded of *Imagination*, *Passion*, and *Reason*; so they seldom confine themselves to their respective Provinces, but lay hold of each others Art, the more effectually to gain Admission and Success to their own. Yet still, the *Masters* in these various Kinds of Composition, know how to keep their several Boundaries *distinct*; not to make unwarrantable Inroads into each others Provinces, nor remove those Lines which Nature

ture hath prescribed: But so to limit their SECT.
III.
Excursions, that the Intelligent may always
know what is designed, a *Poem*, an *Oration*,
or an *Argument*ⁱ.

Thus the judicious Poet, though his immediate and universal Aim is beautiful Imitation, yet in order to become more *pleasing*, endeavours often to be *interesting*, always to be *rational*. His Application being made to *Man*, should he let loose Imagination to its random Flights, he must shock the *Reason* of every penetrating Observer. Hence appears the Necessity of cultivating that Maxim in poetical Composition, which the two best of *French* Critics, *Boileau* and *Bouhours* have so much insisted on; “that all
“poetical Beauty must be founded in
“Truth^k.” Because in the unlimited Excursions of Fancy, though one Faculty should approve, yet another is disgusted:

ⁱ Would it not carry us too far from our Subject, it might perhaps be both a new and pleasing Speculation, to point out the Writers in these several Kinds, who have been most remarkably *excellent* or *defective*, with Regard to *this just Union of these three Species of Composition*. At present it must suffice, to have hinted such a Criticism, which the Reader may easily prosecute.

^k Que si on me demande ce que c'est que cet agrément et ce sel — à mon avis, il consiste principalement à ne jamais présenter au lecteur que des *pensées vrais*,

SECT.
III.

Though Imagination *acquiesce* in false Beauty, Reason will *reject* it with Disdain. Thus, although the primary and essential End of Poetry is to *please* by Imitation; yet as it is addressed to Man, *Instruction* makes a necessary, though an *adventitious* Part of its Character¹.

FROM this View of Things we may, in passing, further see the *Nature, Limits, and comparative Excellence* of the various Kinds of Poetry. The *Descriptive* holds entirely

et des expressions justes. Oeuvres de Boileau, tom. i. Pref. p. 29.

Car enfin, pour vous dire un peu par ordre ce que je pense la dessus, la *verité* est la premiere qualité, et comme le fondement des pensées: les plus belles sont vicieuses; ou plutot celles qui passent pour belles, et qui semblent l'être, ne le sont pas en effet, si ce fonds leur manque. *Bouhours, Man. de bien pens. p. 11.*

¹ Hence the Debate mentioned by *Strabo* (l. i.) between *Eratoſthenes*, and some of the *Ancients*, may easily be decided. The first insisting that *Pleasure*, the other that *Instruction*, was the only End of *Poetry*. They were both wrong: as it appears that these two Ends must always be united in some Degree. However, *Eratoſthenes* was nearer the Truth, as he alledged the *essential* End. 'Tis no bad Description, given by Mr. *Dryden* and others, of the End of Poetry, that it is "to *instruct* by *pleasing*:" Though upon the whole, it throws more Weight on the Circumstance of *Instruction*, than the Thing will bear. The Admirers of Lord S. who love pompous Declamation, may see a great deal said on this Subject, and with little Precision, in *Strada's* Third Prolusion.

of the Imagination, and may be termed *pure* SECT.
III.
Poetry or Imitation: Yet, with regard to the *secondary* End of Instruction, it seems to merit only the lowest Place, because it is then perfect when it satisfies the Imagination; and while it offends not Reason, or the Affections, nothing further with regard to these Faculties is expected from it. The *Tragic, Comic, Satiric*, and the *Elegy*, as they chiefly regard the *Passions* and the Heart of Man, so they draw much of their Force from the Sources of *Eloquence*. On the other hand, the *Didactic*, as it makes its chief Application to Reason, though it retains so much of the Graces of Imagination, as to merit the Name of Poetry, is principally of the *logical* Species. The *Epic*, by its great Extent, includes all these Kinds by turns, and is therefore the *noblest*, both in its *primary* and *secondary* Intention. Much indeed hath been occasionally asserted by several Writers, concerning the superior Dignity of the *tragic* Species^m: But this hath been more in the Way of Affirmation than Proof. Their Opinion seems to have

^m Thus the excellent Mr. Addison: "A perfect Tragedy is the noblest Production of humane Nature." *Spectator*, N^o 39.

SECT.
III.

been founded on a mistaken Interpretation of ARISTOTLE, whose supposed Authority on this Subject hath generally passed unquestioned. But whoever shall thoroughly examine the Sentiments of the *grand Master*, will find he only meant to assert, that the *Mode of Imitation* in *Tragedy* is more forcible, and therefore superior to that of the *epic* Kind; because in the *last*, the Action is only *told*, in the former, it is *visibly represented*. This is the Truth. But if we consider, not the *Mode* of Imitation, but the *Subjects* imitated; if we consider the comparative *Greatness* of the Action which these two Kinds of Poetry can comprehend; and the moral Ends of *Instruction*, no less than the Variety and Beauty of *Description*, which constitutes the very Essence of Poetry; we shall find the Epic greatly superior, on account of the Extent and Importance of those *Actions*, and the Variety of *Characters* which it is capable of involving. Thus for Instance, such an Action as the Death of OEDIPUS or CATO may be more perfectly imitated (because *visibly represented*) in Tragedy, than in the Epos: But a much greater and more extensive Action, such as the *Establishment of an Empire*, with
all

all its subordinate Episodes, religious, political, and moral, cannot be comprehended or exhibited in *Tragedy*, while yet they may be perfectly described in the *Epopée*.

SECT.
III.

So much concerning *Poetry* will be found to have Relation to our Subject. But as the Question concerning *Ridicule* will turn chiefly on the proper Subordination of *Eloquence*, it will be necessary to consider this Kind of Composition in a more particular Manner.

ELOQUENCE then is no other than a Species of Poetry applied to the particular End of Persuasion. For Persuasion can only be effected by rowzing the Passions of the Soul; and these, we have seen, are only to be moved by a Force impressed on the Imagination, assuming the Appearance of Truth; which is the essential Nature of poetical Composition. Thus the Lord VERULAM:
“ In all Persuasions that are wrought by
“ Eloquence, and other Impression of like
“ Nature, which paint and disguise the true
“ Appearance of Things, the chief Recommendation unto *Reason*, is from the *Imagination*.” And the judicious *Strabo*, consistently with this Theory, tells us, that

ⁿ De Aug. Scient. l. ii.

SECT. in Fact "the oratorical Elocution was but
 III. "an Imitation of the poetical: This ap-
 "peared first, and was approved: They
 "who imitated it, took off the Measures,
 "but still preserved all the other Parts of
 "Poetry in their Writings: Such were
 "CADMUS the Milesian, PHERECYDES, and
 "HECATÆUS. Their Followers then took
 "something more from what was left, and
 "at length Elocution descended into the
 "Prose which is now among us°.

THUS as the Passions must have an *ap-
 parent Object* of Good or Evil offered by the
 Imagination in order to excite them; so
 Eloquence must offer *apparent Evidence*
 ere it can be received and acquiesced in:
 For the Mind cannot embrace known False-
 hood. So that every Opinion which Elo-
 quence instills, though it be the pure Result
 of certain fictitious Images impressed on the
 Fancy, is always regarded as the Result of
 rational Conviction, and received by the
 Mind as Truth.

° Πρωτιστα γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ καλὰ σκευὴ παρηλθεν εἰς το
 μέσον, καὶ εὐδοκίμησεν· εἶτα ἐκείνην μιμῶμενοι, λυσάντες
 τὸ μέτρον, τ' ἀλλὰ δὲ φυλαξάντες τὰ ποιητικά, συνεγρά-
 ψαν οἱ περὶ Καδμόν, καὶ Φερεκυδὴν, καὶ Ἐκάλαιον· εἶτα
 οἱ ὕστερον, ἀφαιρῶντες αἰετὶ τῶν τοιχίων, εἰς τὸ νῦν εἶδος
 κατήγαγον, ὡς ἀν' ἀποὺς τινος. Strabo, lib. i.

HENCE

HENCE we may perceive the just Foundation of the well-known Maxim in rhetorical Composition, *Artis est celare artem*. In every other Art, where the End is Pleasure, Instruction, or Admiration, the greater Art the Master displays, the more effectually he gains his Purpose. But where the End is Persuasion, the Discovery of his Art must defeat its Force and Design. For ere he can persuade, he must seem to apply to his Hearer's *Reason*, while, in Fact, he is working on his Imagination and Affections: Now this, once known, must defeat his Purpose; because nothing can persuade but what has the *Appearance of Truth*.

HENCE too we may see where the true Medium lies between the too frequent *Use*, and delicate *Avoidance* of poetical Images, in Eloquence. Metaphors, Similies, bold Figures, and glowing Expressions are proper, so far as they point the Imagination to the main Subject on which the Passion is to be excited: When they begin to *amuse*, they grow absurd. And here, by the way, lies the essential Difference between the *Epic* and *Tragic* Composition. For the *Epic*, tending chiefly to Admiration and Instruction, allows a full Display of Art; But

SECT. the *Tragic*, being of the persuasive Kind,
 III. must only regard and touch upon poetical
 Images in this single View, *as they tend to*
rouze the Passions of the Soul. MACRO-
 BIUS^p hath collected many elegant Exam-
 ples of this *poetic Elocution* from the *Eneid*:
 He hath ranged them in Classes, and pointed
 out the Fountains whence the great Poet
 drew his *Pathos*: And sure, it may with
 Truth be affirmed, that “ the Master-
 “ strokes of that divine Work are rather of
 “ the *Tragic*, than the *Epic* Species.”

THESE Remarks will enable us to disco-
 ver the Impropriety of an Opinion com-
 monly held^q; “ that the Reason why Elo-
 “ quence had such Power, and wrought
 “ such Wonders in *Athens* and *Rome*, was,
 “ because it had become the general Taste
 “ and Study of the Times: That conse-
 “ quently these Cities were more sensible
 “ to its Charms, and therefore more warmly
 “ affected by it.” Now, though with re-
 gard to pure *Poetry* or strict *Argument*,
 where either Pleasure or Truth are the pur-
 posed Ends, this Reasoning might hold;
 yet, when applied to *Eloquence*, it seems to

^p Saturnal. l. iv. passim.
 Essay on Eloquence.

^q See Mr. Hume's

be without Foundation. For where *Ignorance* is predominant, *there* any Application to the Fancy or the Passions is most likely to wear the Appearance of Reason, and therefore the most likely to persuade. As Men improve in Knowledge, such Application must proportionably lose its Force, and true Reasoning prevail. Hence it should seem, that they who make the constituent Principles of Eloquence familiar to their Imagination, must of all others be best enabled to separate *Truth* from its *Appearances*, and distinguish between *Argument* and *Colouring*. An artful Oration will indeed afford great Pleasure to one who hath applied himself to the Study of Rhetoric: Yet, not so as that he shall be *persuaded* by it: On the contrary, his Pleasure consists in a reflex Act of the Understanding; and arises from the very Circumstance which prevents Persuasion, a *Discovery of the Master's Art*.

THE true Reason therefore, why Eloquence gained such mighty Power in these famed Republics was, "because the Orators addressed themselves to the *People* as "their *Judges*." Here the Art triumphed: for it had not *Reason* to instruct, but *Imagination* and *Passion* to controul. According-
ly

SECT.
III.

ly we find, that no sooner was the popular Government destroy'd, and the supreme Power lodged in a single Hand, than Eloquence began sensibly to languish and decay: The mighty Orators, who could sway the Passions of a mixed Multitude, found their Art baffled and overthrown when opposed to the cool Determinations of cunning Ministers, or the determined Will of arbitrary Masters. Thus with great Judgment, though not much Honesty, the *Roman* Poet exhorts his Countrymen to disdain the low Accomplishments of Eloquence: He knew they belonged to a Republic:

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra —

Orabunt causas melius —

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:

Hæ tibi erunt artes: —

With the same Penetration he lays the Scene in a *popular Assembly*, when he gives us a Picture of Eloquence triumphant. I mean in that fine Passage where he compares NEPTUNE *stilling the Noise of the Waves*, to an Orator *appeasing the Madness of the People*:

^r Eneïd. l. vi.

Ac

Ac veluti *magno in populo* cum sæpe coorta est S E C T.
Seditio, sævitque animis *ignobile vulgus*; III.

Jamque faces et saxa volant; furor arma ministrat;

Tum pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem

Conspexere, silent, *arrestisque auribus astant*;

Ille *regit dictis animos*, et pectora mulcet:

Sic cunctus pelagi cecidit fragor^s.——

'Tis true, we have a supposed Instance on Record, of the Power of TULLY'S Eloquence, after Liberty was destroy'd, even on the great *Destroyer* himself. When we read the Oration^t, we stand amazed at its Effects: For sure there is nothing *equal* to them in the Composition itself: And it appears an Event almost unaccountable, that CESAR, who was himself an accomplished Orator, who knew all the Windings of the Art, and was at ~~the~~ the same Time of the most determined Spirit, should be so shaken on this Occasion as to tremble, drop his Papers, and acquit the Prisoner. Though many have attributed this to the Force of TULLY'S *Elocution*^v; it seems rather to have been the Effect of CESAR'S *Art*. We

^s En. l. i. ^t Pro Ligario.
W. Temple, Mr. Hume, &c.

^v Casaubon, Sir

SECT. know with what unwearied Application he
 III. courted CICERO's Friendship; he saw where
 his Vanity and his Weakness lay: With
 perfect Address therefore he play'd back the
 Orator's Art upon himself: His concern
 was *feigned*, and his Mercy *artificial*; as he
 knew that nothing could so effectually win
 TULLY to his Party, as giving him the Pride
 of having *conquered* CESAR.

BUT whatever of Truth there may be
 in this Conjecture; so much is evident, that
 the Scene where alone Eloquence can work
 its mighty Effects, is that of a *popular As-*
sembly. An absolute Monarchy quencheth
 it at once. Nor can public Freedom itself
 give it any considerable Play, where the
 public Freedom hath any firmer Basis, than
 that of a mere Democracy. For where the
 Councils of a Nation depend on the united
 Reason of elected Representatives, or wise
 and cunning Statesmen, though the laboured
 Effays of Eloquence may often *amuse*, they
 will seldom *determine*. This seems to be
 the Case of our own Age and Country:
 And were it necessary to enlarge on this
 Subject, it might be made appear, that they
 who complain of the Decay of public Elo-
 quence among us, assign a Cause which hath
 no

no real Existence, when they attribute that SECT. III.
Decay to a Neglect of the Art^w, while, in
Fact, it necessarily arises from the ruling
Principles of the Times, and the Nature of
our Constitution.

THUS Eloquence gains its End of Per-
suasion by offering *apparent* Truth to the
Imagination; as Argument gains its proper
End of Conviction by offering *real* Truth
to the Understanding. Mr. HOBBS seems
to have been well aware of this Distinction.
“ This, says he, *viz.* laying Evidence be-
“ fore the Mind, is called *teaching*; the
“ Hearer is therefore said to *learn*: But if
“ there be not such Evidence, then such
“ teaching is called *Persuasion*, and beget-
“ teth no more in the Hearer, than what is
“ in the Speaker’s *bare Opinion*.”

HERE then we perceive, that the Conse-
quences of Eloquence, with regard to spe-
culative *Instruction* and *Inquiry*, are of a very
different Nature from those which relate to
Morals and *Action*. To Instruction or In-
quiry, every Species of Eloquence must for
ever be an Enemy: For though it may lead
the Mind to acquiesce in a just Opinion, yet

^w See Mr. Hume’s Essay on Eloquence.
on Hum. Nature.

^x Hobbes

SECT.
III.

it leads it to acquiesce upon a false Foundation: It puts the Hearer or Reader in the Speaker's or Writer's Power: And though he be so honest as to lead him in the Path of Truth, yet still he leads him *blind-fold*. In this Sense, and under this Limitation, Mr. LOCKE's Remark is true: " We must
 " allow that all the Art of Rhetoric, besides
 " Order and Clearness, all the artificial and
 " figurative Application of Words Elo-
 " quence hath invented, are for nothing else
 " but to *insinuate wrong Ideas, move the*
 " *Passions, and thereby mislead the Judgment,*
 " and so indeed are perfect Cheats."

But if we regard what is of more Importance to Man, than mere speculative Truth, I mean the *practical Ends* of human Life and moral Action; then Eloquence assumes a higher Nature: Nor is there, in this practical Sense, any necessary Connexion between *moving* the Passions, and *misleading* the Judgment. For though the Ends of Truth and Persuasion are then essentially different when the Orator strikes the Imagination with fictitious Images, in which case Falsehood becomes apparent Truth, and Eloquence the Instru-

Locke on Hum. Und.

ment

ment of Deceit; yet the Ends of Persuasion and Conviction, Opinion and Knowledge SECT. III.

 concur, when such Impressions are made on the Imagination and Passions, as consist with the Dictates of right Reason. In this case, Eloquence comes in to the Aid of Argument, and *impresses* the Truths which Logic teaches, in a warmer and more effectual Manner. It paints real Good and Evil in all the glowing Colours of Imagination, and thus inflames the Heart with double Ardor to embrace the one, and reject the other.

NAY, so far is Eloquence from being the universal Instrument of practical Deceit; that on the contrary, it should seem, the *moral* is more natural than the *immoral* Application of it. Because, ere the dishonest Application can take place, Circumstances must be wrested, and Misrepresentations imposed on the Fancy, in Opposition to Truth and Reason: Whereas in the proper Application, nothing further is necessary, than to draw out and impress those Images and Analogies of Things, which really exist in Nature.

It may be further observed, that as Eloquence is of a vague, unsteady Nature,
merely

SECT.
III.

merely relative to the Imaginations and Passions of Mankind; so there must be several Orders or Degrees of it, subordinate to each other in Dignity, yet each perfect in their Kind. The common *End* of each is Persuasion: The *Means* are different according to the various Capacities, Fancies, and Affections of those whom the Artist attempts to persuade. The pathetic Orator, who throws a *Congregation* of *Enthusiasts* into Tears and Groanings, would raise Affections of a very different Nature, should he attempt to proselyte an *English Parliament*: As on the other hand, the finest Speaker that ever commanded *the House*, would in vain point the Thunder of his Eloquence on a *Quaker-meeting*. So again, with regard to the Oratory (if it may be called so) of the *Bar*, at a *Country Assize* (for the higher Courts of Justice admit not Eloquence) it is easy to observe, what a different Tour the learned Council takes, in addressing himself to the *Judge* or *Jury*: He is well aware, that what passes with the *one* for *Argument* of Proof, would be derided by the *other* as pasteboard *Declamation*. This Difference in the Kind, with respect to the Eloquence of the *Pulpit*, is no less remarkable

able in different Countries. Thus the very S E C T.
III.
agreeable and sensible VOLTAIRE observes, that “ in *France* (*where Reasoning hath little Connexion with Religion*) a Sermon is a “ long Declamation, spoken with Rapture “ and Enthusiasm: That in *Italy* (*where Taste and Vertú give a Tincture to Superstition itself*) a Sermon is a Kind of devotional Comedy: That in *England* (*where Religion submits to Reason*) it is a solid “ Dissertation, sometimes a dry one, which “ is read to the Congregation without “ Action or Elocution².” And he justly concludes, that the Discourse which raiseth a French Audience to the highest Pitch of Devotion, would throw an *English* one into a Fit of Laughter.

HENCE too, and hence alone, we may account for a Fact, which, however, seemingly improbable, is too well-known to be doubted of: “ That although in *France*, “ the applauded Pulpit Eloquence is of the

² The Passage in the Original is thus: “ Un sermon “ en France est une longue declamation scrupuleusement divisée en trois points, et recitée avec enthousiasme. En Angleterre un sermon est une dissertation solide, et quelquefois sèche, qu’un homme lit au peuple sans geste, et sans aucune éclat de voix. En Italie c’est une comédie spirituelle.

SECT. III. " *Enthusiastic*, in *England* of the severe and
 " *rational* Species; yet the Taste of these
 " two Nations in Tragedy or *Theatrical*
 " *Eloquence*, is mutually *reversed*: The
 " *English* are *Enthusiastic*; the *French* se-
 " vere and rational." Now, though this
 Fact may carry the Appearance of Self-
 contradiction, yet on the Principle here laid
 down, the known Circumstances of the two
 Kingdoms will explain it sufficiently. In
England, a general Spirit of *Reasoning* and
 Enquiry hath extinguished the natural En-
 thusiasms of the human Mind in *religious*
Subjects; while our unrestrained Warmth
 of Imagination, and habitual Reverence for
 the noble Irregularities of SHAKESPEAR,
 concur to make us despise the rigid Laws
 of the Stage: On the contrary, in *France*,
 the Severities of the *Academy* have utterly
 quenched the high Tragic Spirit; while, as
 yet, *religious Criticism* hath made but little
 Progress among the Subjects of the *most*
Christian King.

IN further Proof of this Principle, we
 may appeal to ancient Fact: To the Pro-
 gress of Eloquence in *Greece*. There we
 find, it first appeared, decked in all the glow-
 ing Colours of Poetry: afterwards, in an
 Age

Age of more polished Manners and extensive Knowledge, when the Rhetors attempted to carry this Kind of Eloquence to a still higher Degree, they found the Times would not bear it: They were baffled in their Attempt. As succeeding Ages grew more knowing, they grew more fastidious and refined: The Orators were obliged gradually to lower and bring down Eloquence from its high Standard: Till at length it gained a Form and Character entirely new, as we find it in XENOPHON'S chastised Manner of *Attic Elegance*^a.

To conclude with one Proof more in Favour of this Principle. It appears that these different Kinds were acknowledged sufficiently in ancient *Rome*; though the true Distinction between them seems not to have been thoroughly perceived, unless by TULLY himself. The correct and *Attic* Species having gained a Number of Admirers under the Patronage of SALLUST, who first encouraged it in *Rome*^b, many

^a See the Passage quoted above from Strabo, p. 22.

§ 3.

^b Sic *Sallustio* vigente, amputatæ sententiæ, et verba ante expectatum cadentia, et obscura brevitās, fuere pro cultu. Senec. Epist.

SECT. were the Debates concerning the superior
 III. Force and Propriety of *this* or the more
elevated Manner. The Patrons of the *Attic*
 Style derided CICERO, as being *loose, tumid,*
 and *exuberant*^c: On the contrary, he too
 had his Partizans, who despised the calm
 and correct Species, as void of Energy and
 Power^d. Thus by overlooking the *relative*
 Nature of Eloquence, they mutually fell
 into an Extreme; both forgetting, that ei-
 ther of these Kinds might be of superior
 Propriety and Force, according to the Ima-
 ginations, Passions, and Capacities of those
 to whom they should be applied. But
 TULLY, with a superior Sagacity, saw clear-
 ly where the true Distinction lay: For,
 speaking of CALVUS, a Patronizer of the
Attic Manner, he says, "HENCE his Elo-
 quence gained a high Reputation among
 " *the Learned and Attentive*; but among

^c Constat, nec Ciceroni quidem obtrectatores defuisse,
 quibus inflatus et tumens, nec satis pressus, supra mo-
 dum exultans, et superfluens, et *parum Atticus* videretur.
 Dialog. apud Tacit.

^d Mihi falli multum videntur, qui solos esse Atticos cre-
 dunt, tenues et lucidos et significantes, sed quadam elo-
 quentiæ frugalitate contentos, ac manum semper intra
 pallium continentes. Quintil.

" *the*

“ *the Vulgar*, for whom Eloquence was chiefly formed, it was of no Esteem^e.”

SECT.
III.

Now among these several Kinds of Eloquence, Justness of Thought and Expression, striking Figures, Argument adorned with every pathetic Grace, are the Characters of the *highest*: Sophistry and Buffoonry, ambiguous and dishonest Hints, coarse Language, false and indecent Images, are the Characters of the *lowest*. Between these two Extremes, there lies a Variety of intermediate Kinds, each ascending towards the highest, in Proportion as they abound with its proper Characters. For as the Imagination and Passions are then most refined and just, when they bear to the same Point with Reason; so, that Species of Eloquence is the noblest which tends to conduct them thither^f. On this Principle, and on this

^e Sed ad *Calvum* revertamur — ejus oratio, nimia religione attenuata, doctis et attente audientibus erat illustris; a multitudine autem et à foro, cui nata eloquentia est, devorabatur. In Brut.

^f Les Egyptiens comparoient ceux qui preferent le coloris au dessein dans la peinture, à ceux qui en matiere d'eloquence et de poesie preferent les pensées brillantes aux pensées justes. Ciceron, le maitre et le modele de l'eloquence latine, a dit en appliquant sa reflexion à l'orateur, que nous laissons bientôt des Tableaux qui nous attirent d'abord par la force du coloris; au lieu que

SECT. alone, we may with Propriety and Precision
 III. determine the comparative Excellence and
 Dignity of those who aspire to the Palm of
 Eloquence. On this Principle it seems to
 be, that a severe, but able, Judge prefers
 DEMOSTHENES to TULLY^s: and on this
 Principle he deserves the Preference.

THUS we are at length arrived at the
 Point where Eloquence and Argument,
 Persuasion and Conviction unite; where the
 Orator's Art becomes subservient to the In-
 terests of *Truth*, and only labours to adorn
 and recommend Her.

WE come now to the third Species of
 Composition, that of *Argument*: Which
 applying solely to the Reason of Man, and
 to the Proof or Investigation of Truth, is
 of a more simple and uncompounded Na-
 ture in its Principles, and therefore needs
 not to be so particularly explained. For
 Pleasure being the primary End of Poetry,
 and Persuasion that of Eloquence, the real
 Nature of Things is often in Part disguised,
 and compelled to bend to the Imagination

nous revenons toujours à ceux qui excellent par la beauté
 du dessein, qui est le vrai caractère de l'antique.
 Sethos, l. ii. p. 80.

= See Dr. Swift's Letter to a Young Clergyman.

and

and the Passions: But *Truth* being the End SECT.
III.
of Argument, the varying Colours of Imagination and Passion must be drawn off; and human Reason itself bend to the real, uniform Nature of Things.

YET on this Occasion it may be proper to remark, that the *rational Faculty* in Man cannot be comprehensive or perfect in its Operations, without a Union with a *strong Imagination*. And this, not only in the Arts of Poetry or Eloquence, but in the *severest Investigations* of Truth. For Reason alone cannot search out new Ideas, but only compare and distinguish those which Sense and Imagination present to her, and the Senses being of small Extent, Imagination is therefore the great universal Instrument of human Knowledge and human Action. Without the Aids of Imagination therefore, Reason works in a contracted Sphere; being destitute of Materials; unable to make the necessary Excursions into the Immensity of Nature; and wanting that Power which alone can range through the whole Extent of created Being, and bring Home all the possible and apparent Analogies of Things, setting them before her discerning Eye, and submitting them to her sovereign Appro-

SECT.
III.

bation or Dislike. From this noble Union arises that *boundless Penetration*, which so far surpasseth *mere Judgment*: and which, according as it is exerted in Poetry, Eloquence, Philosophy, Morals, or Religion, strikes into the various and untrodden Paths of Nature and Truth; forms the distinguished Names of HOMER, SHAKESPEAR, MILTON, DEMOSTHENES, TULLY, ARISTOTLE, BACON, LOCKE, BAYLE, PASCAL, NEWTON, HOOKER, BERKLEY, WARBURTON, giving that essential Superiority and Preheminence, which hath ever been, first the *Envy*, and then the *Admiration* of Mankind.

THUS as it appeared above, how necessary the Restraints of Reason are, to the Perfection of Works of Imagination; so here it is evident, that a full Union of Imagination is necessary to the perfect Operations of Reason. Taken singly, they are each *defective*: When their Powers are joined, they constitute TRUE GENIUS.

BUT, however requisite the Force of Imagination may be, to the Perfection of Reason, and the Production of *true Genius*, yet still Reason remains the superior and corrective Power: Therefore every Representation of Poetry or Eloquence, which

I

only



only apply to the Fancy and Affections, must SECT. III.
finally be examined and decided upon, must
be *tried, rejected, or received*, as the *reasoning Faculty* shall determine.

AND thus REASON alone is the *Detecter of Falsehood*, and the TEST OF TRUTH.

SECTION IV.

HE who would judge aright of the SECT. IV.
Proportions of a spacious Dome, must not
creep from one Corner to another by the
Help of a glimmering Taper, but rather
light up a central Branch, which may illuminate the whole at once. By doing something like this in our Remarks on the three different Kinds of Composition, we have enabled the intelligent Reader to see with ease: “That Wit, Raillery, and Ridicule, in every Shape they can possibly assume, are no other than so many Species of *Poetry or Eloquence*.”

PURE *Wit*, when not applied to the Characters of Men, is properly a Species of Poetry. It amuses and delights the Imagination by those sudden Assemblages and pleasing Pictures of Things which it creates: and from every common Occasion can raise
such

SECT. IV. such striking Appearances, as throw the most phlegmatic Tempers into a Convulsion of good-humoured Mirth, and *undesigned Laughter*.

BUT *Ridicule* or *Raillery*, which is the Subject of our Inquiry, hath a further Scope and Intention. It solely regards the Opinions, Passions, Actions, and Characters of Men: and may properly be denominated “that Species of Writing which excites “Contempt with Laughter.”

STILL more particularly we may observe, that as Eloquence in general is but the Application of Poetry to the End of Persuasion, so Ridicule in particular is no more than the Application of that particular Species of Poetry called Wit, to the same End of Persuasion. It tends to excite *Contempt*, in the same Manner as the other Modes of Eloquence raise Love, Pity, Terror, Rage, or Hatred, in the *Heart* of Man.

Now, that *Contempt* which certain Objects raise in the Mind, is a particular *Mode of Passion*. The Objects of this Passion are apparent *Falsehood*, *Incongruity*, *Impropriety*, or *Turpitude* of certain Kinds. But as the Object of every excited Passion must be examined by Reason ere we can determine whether

whether it be proper or improper, real or fictitious ; so, every Object that excites Contempt must fall under this general Rule. Thus, before it can be determined whether our Contempt be *just*, Reason alone must *examine* Circumstances, separate Ideas, distinguish Truth from its Appearances, decide upon, restrain, and *correct the Passion*.

Thus *Ridicule* is no other than a *Species of Eloquence*: and accordingly we find it mentioned and expressly treated as such, by the best Writers of Antiquity. ARISTOTLE, as in every Subject, leads the Way. “ As Ridicule seems to be of some Use in *pleading*, it was the Opinion of GORGIAS, that you ought to confound your Adversary’s *serious Argument* by *Raillery*, and his *Raillery* by *serious Argument*. And he judged well^h.” Here he first gives the Sentiments of a *Sage*; and then confirms them by his own Authority.

To offer all that TULLY hath said upon the Subject of Ridicule, would be to transcribe a considerable Part of his second Book

^h περὶ δὲ τῶν γελοίων, ἐπεὶ δὲ τίνα δοκεῖ χρῆσιν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς ἀγῶσι, καὶ δεῖν εἶπαι Γοργίᾳ τὴν μὲν σπουδὴν διαφθεῖρειν τῶν ἐναντίων γελώϊ, τὸν δὲ γελώϊα σπουδὴν ὀρθῶς λεγῶν. Arist. Rhet. l. iii. c. 18.

De

SECT.
IV.

De Oratore. After having gone through several Topics of Rhetoric, he comes at length to this of *Ridicule*: and assigns to the elder CESAR the Task of explaining the Force and Application of this Art. In the Course of his Reasonings on this Subject, he affirms First, That Ridicule is a Branch of Eloquenceⁱ. 2^{dly}, That certain Kinds of Turpitude or Incongruity are its proper Object^k. 3^{dly}, That the Orator must be temperate in the Application of it^l. 4^{thly}, That its Force may consist either in Thought or Expression, but that its Perfection lies in a Union of both^m. And lastly, That af-

ⁱ Est autem plane oratoris movere risum.—Res sæpe, quas argumentis dilui non facile est, joco, risuque dissolvit.

^k Locus autem et regio quasi ridiculi, turpitudine quadam et deformitate continetur.—Nec insignis improbitas et scelere juncta, nec rursus miseria insignis agitata ridetur.—Quamobrem materies omnis ridiculorum est in istis vitiis,—quæ neque odio magno, nec misericordia maxima digna sunt.

^l In quo, non modo illud præcipitur, ne quid insulse; sed etiam, si quid perridicule possis: vitandum est oratori utrumque, ne aut scurrilis jocus sit, aut mimicus.

^m Duo sunt genera facetiarum, quorum alterum re tractatur, alterum dicto.—Nam quod quibuscunque verbis dixeris, facetum tamen est, *re* continetur: quod, mutatis verbis, salem amittit, in verbis habet leporem omnem.—maxime autem homines delectari, si quando risus conjuncte, *re, verboque* moveatur.

ter all, it is but the lowest Kind of Eloquenceⁿ. SECT.
IV.

QUINTILIAN builds chiefly on TULLY, when he treats of Ridicule in the sixth Book of his Institutions. He too considers it as a Branch of Eloquence, and gives Rules for its Efficacy and Restraint^o.

Now, in Consequence of these Proofs, a few Observations will naturally arise with regard to *Ridicule in particular*, similar to those which were made in the last Section, upon *Eloquence in general*.

As first: Ridicule must render every Proposition it supports *apparently true*, ere it can be received and acquiesced in. Thus every Opinion which Ridicule instills, tho' it be the pure Result of certain Images impressed on the Imagination, by which the Passion of Contempt is excited, is always

ⁿ Est, mea sententia, vel tenuissimus ingenii fructus. *De Oratore*, l. ii. *passim*.

^o Risum judicis movendo, et illos tristes solvit affectus, et animum ab intentione rerum frequenter avertit: et aliquando etiam reficit, et à satietate vel à fatigatione renovat.—Habet enim, ut *Cicero* dicit, sedem in deformitate aliqua et turpitudine. —Rerum autem sæpe, ut dixi, maximarum momenta vertit, cum odium iramque frequentissime frangat.—Ea quæ dicit vir bonus, omnia salva dignitate ac verecundia dicet: nimium enim risus pretium est, si probitatis impendio constat. *Quint. Inst.* l. vi.

regarded

SECT. regarded as the Conviction of Reason, and
 IV. received by the Mind as Truth. And thus
 by offering apparent Truth, Ridicule gains
 its End of Persuasion.

AGAIN, it may be observed, that the
 Consequences of Ridicule with regard to
speculative Instruction or Inquiry, are of a
 very different Nature from those which re-
 late to Morals and Action. To the first it
 must ever be an *Enemy*: But to the latter it
 may be an Enemy or Friend according as it
 is fairly or dishonestly applied. It comes in
 to the Aid of Argument, when its Im-
 pressions on the Imagination and Passions
 are consistent with the real Nature of
 Things: When it strikes the Fancy and Af-
 fections with fictitious Images, it becomes
 the Instrument of Deceit.

THUS Ridicule may befriend either Truth
 or Falsehood: and as it is morally or im-
 morally applied, may illustrate the one, or
 disguise the other. Yet it should seem, that
 the moral is more natural, than the immoral
 Application of Ridicule; inasmuch as Truth
 is more congenial to the Mind than False-
 hood, and so, the *real* more easily made
apparent, than the *fictitious* Images of
 Things.

RIDICULE

RIDICULE, therefore, being of a vague, SECT. IV.
 unsteady Nature, merely relative to the
 Imaginations and Passions of Mankind,
 there must be several Orders or Degrees of
 it, suited to the Fancies and Capacities of
 those whom the Artist attempts to influence.
 Among these several Kinds of Ridicule,
 Justness of Thought and Expression, adorn-
 ed with striking Figures, is the *highest*:
 Coarse Language, Buffoonry, false and inde-
 cent Images, are the Characters of the *low-
 est*. For as the Imagination and Passions
 are then most refined and just, when they
 bear to the same Point with Reason; so,
 that Species of Ridicule is most genuine
 which tends to conduct them thither.

BUT, however Ridicule may *impress*
 the Idea of apparent Turpitude or False-
 hood on the Imagination; yet still Reason
 remains the superior and corrective Power.
 Therefore, every Representation of Ridi-
 cule, which only applies to the Fancy and
 Affections, must *finally* be *examined* and *de-
 cided* upon, must be *tried*, *rejected*, or *re-
 ceived*, as the *reasoning Faculty* shall *deter-
 mine*.

AND thus *Ridicule* can never be a *De-
 tector of Falsehood*, or a *Test of Truth*.

SECTION

SECTION. V.

SECT. IN further Confirmation of these Truths,
V. the direct Proofs of which may possibly lie somewhat remote from common Apprehension, let us appeal to Experience; to the general Sense and Practice of Mankind. And here we shall find, that Contempt and Ridicule are always founded on *preconceived Opinion*, whatever be the Foundation of it, whether *Reason* or *Imagination*, *Truth* or *Falsehood*.

FOR in Fact, do not we see every different Party and Association of Men despising and deriding each other according to their various Manner of Thought, Speech, and Action? Does not the Courtier deride the Foxhunter, and the Foxhunter the Courtier? What is more ridiculous to a Beau, than a Philosopher; to a Philosopher, than a Beau? Drunkards are the Jest of sober Men, and sober Men of Drunkards. Physicians, Lawyers, Soldiers, Priests, and Free-thinkers, are the standing Subjects of Ridicule to one another. Wisdom and Folly, the Virtuous and the Vile, the Learned and Ignorant, the Temperate and Debauched, all

all give and return the Jest. According to SECT.
V.
the various Impressions of Fancy and Affection, the Aspects of Things are varied; and consequently the same Object, seen under these different Lights and Attitudes, must in one Mind produce *Approbation*, in another *Contempt*.

IF we examine the Conduct of *political* Bodies or *religious* Sects, we shall find it of a similar Nature. Each of these *railly* every other, according to the Prejudices they have imbibed in Favour of their own System. How contemptible and ridiculous are the *European* Forms of Government, in the Eyes of an *Asiatic*? And do not we on this Side the *Hellespont* repay them in their own Kind? Are we a whit more united among ourselves in our Ideas of the *Ridiculous*, when applied to Modes of Empire? What is more contemptible to an *Englishman*, than that slavish Submission to arbitrary Will and lawless Power, which prevails almost universally on the Continent? And they are little acquainted with the State

† A *Venetian* was introduced to the King of *Pegu*: When this Prince was informed by him, that the *Venetians* had *no King*, he *laughed* so excessively, that he lost his Breath, and could not speak for a good while. *Recueil des Voyages, &c.*

E

of

SECT. of Affairs *abroad*, who know not that,
 V. within the Precincts of Tyranny, *English*
 Freedom is one of the commonest Topics of
 Raillery and Ridicule: Every Man's judg-
 ing for himself, is the Subject of the *French-*
man's Drollery: One Man's judging *for all*,
 is the Subject of ours. The Case is parallel
 with regard to religious Tenets, where Peo-
 ple are at Liberty to speak their Thoughts.
 Is there any Species of Invective which the
 Church of *Rome* hath not exercised upon all
 who have dissented from its Measures? And
 have not the Divines of the *reformed*
 Churches been as arrant *Droles*, in Vindi-
 cation of their respective Systems? What
 Ribaldry and coarse Banter hath been thrown
 (nay rather, what hath *not* been thrown) by
 the *Freethinkers*, on Religion and *Christi-*
anity? And how basely have some of our
 Divines prostituted their Pens in former
 Days, by descending to the same dirty Le-
 vel? Even the Soureness of Puritanism, nay,
 the Sullenness of *Quakerism* have sometimes
 relaxed and yielded themselves up to the
 Love of *Joking*: And sly Hints, in demure
 Phrase and sober Countenance, have as
 plainly spoken their Contempt of those they
 pitied, as the loud Laughter and Grimace
 of

Essay on RIDICULE.

51

of worldly Men, the Disdain of those they profess to hate. SECT.
V.

BUT what need we wonder that a Difference of Opinion in such weighty Affairs as those of Government and Religion should inspire a mutual Contempt, when we see that any considerable Variation of Manners in the most ordinary Circumstances of Life has the same Effect? The Customs of ancient Times have been held so ridiculous by many Moderns, that honest HOMER hath been branded as a Dunce, only because he hath recorded them. What Raillery hath been thrown on the venerable Bard, as well as the Hero he describes, only because he hath told us, that PATROCLUS acted in the Capacity of *Cook* for himself, and his Friend *Achilles*^a: And that the Princess *Nausicaa* followed by all her Maids, went down to wash the King's and Queen's Cloaths along with her own^r? *Rebecca* and her *Historian*^s have fallen under the same ignorant Censure, because she went down *to draw Water*: And so have the Daughters of AUGUSTUS, for spinning their Father's Cloaths,

^a *Il.*

^r *Odyss.*

^s *Genesis.*

SECT. V. when he was Master of the World. Thus
 the undebauched Simplicity of ancient
 Times, becomes the Jest of modern Luxury
 and Folly. From the same Principle, any
 new Mode of Speech or Action, seen in our
 own Times, appears ridiculous to those who
 give Way to the Sallies of *uninformed* Con-
 tempt and Laughter. What superior Airs
 of Mirth and Gayety may be seen in a Club
 of Citizens, passing Judgment on the *Scotch*,
 the *Western*, or any other *remote provincial*
Dialect? while at *the other End of the*
Town, the Stream of *Ridicule* runs as strong
 on the Manners and *Dialect* of the *Ex-*
change. The least unusual Circumstance
 of Habit, beyond what the Fashion pre-
 scribes, is by turns so sensibly ridiculous,
 that one half of the Expence of Dress seems
 to consist in accommodating it to the Dic-
 tates and Caprice of the current Opinion.
 And it is a just Complaint of the greatest
 Tragic Poet of the Age, that this indulged
 Spirit of Ridicule is a fundamental Ob-
 struction to the Improvement of the *French*
 Theatre. “ We dare not, says he, ha-
 “ zard any thing new upon the Stage, in
 “ the Presence of a People whose constant
 “ Practice

Essay on RIDICULE.

53

“Practice is, to ridicule every thing that is SECT.
“not fashionable^t.” V.

NEITHER is the Taste of Mankind less capricious with regard to the Methods of Ridicule^v, than the Objects of it. How many *Sayings* and *Repartées* are recorded from Antiquity as the Quintessence of Raillery, which among *us* only raise a Laugh, because they are *insipid*? TULLY himself often attempts in vain to extort a Smile from his modern Reader. Even the *sales Plautini* have in great Measure lost their *Poignancy*. There is a certain *Mode* of Ridicule peculiar to every Age and Country. What a curious Contrast to each other are an *Italian* and a *Dutch* Buffoon? And I suppose the Raillery of a *French* and a *Russian* Drôle are as different as the nimble Pranks of a *Monkey*, from the rude Gambols of a *Bear*. Even the same Country hath numerous Subdivisions and *under*

^t Nous craignons de hazarder sur la scene de spectacles nouveaux devant une nation accoutumée à tourner en ridicule tout ce qui n'est pas *d'Usage*. Voltaire, *Disc. sur la trag.*

^v Quænam tandem in loquendo, aut in scribendo, quasi titillatione risum lacessunt? dictum unum, aut alterum: brevicula narratio: nonnihil repentinum, et fortuitum, et recens, et novitate sua primum. Vavassor, *De ludicra dictione*.

SECT. V. *Species of Ridicule.* What is high Humour at *Wapping*, is rejected as nauseous in the *City*: What is delicate Raillery in the *City*, grows *coarse* and *intolerable* as you approach *St. James's*: And many a well meant Joke, that passes unheeded in all these various Districts, would set an innocent Country Village in an Uproar of Laughter.

THIS Subject might be much enlarged on: For the Modes and Objects of Ridicule are as indefinite as the imagined Combinations of Things. But from these Examples drawn from the Conduct of particulars, it appears no less than from the general Nature and Faculties of Man, that Ridicule hath no other Source than Imagination, Passion, Prejudice, and preconceived Opinion: And therefore can never be *the Detector of Falsehood, or Test of Truth.*

SECTION VI.

SECT. VI. THE Cause might be safely rested here. Yet, to throw a still clearer Light on the Subject of our Enquiry, let us now examine what his Lordship hath advanced in Support of his new Method of Investigation. And

And as the noble Writer hath not thought SECT.
VI.
it expedient to descend often to the argumentative Way; we must make the most of what we find in him that looks like a Reason.

HE tells his Friend, that “ nothing is ridiculous except what is deformed; nor is “ any thing Proof against Raillery, except “ what is handsome and just:---one may “ defy the World to turn real Bravery and “ Generosity into Ridicule. A Man must “ be soundly ridiculous, who, with all the “ Wit imaginable, would go about to ridicule Wisdom, or laugh at Honesty or “ good Manners^w. ”

HERE we have a Mixture of equivocal Language and pompous Declamation. If he means to assert, that “ nothing is ridiculous, except what is *apparently* deformed,” the Proposition is true, but foreign to the Purpose: Because, through the Error of Imagination, Things *apparently deformed* may be *really beautiful*. If he means to assert, that “ nothing can be made to appear ridiculous, but what is *really* deformed,” I should be glad to know where the noble Author had conversed: In the

^w Vol. i. p. 128, 129.

SECT. VI. *Platonic Republic*, it may be so: But, in our *Gothic Systems*, Matters go quite otherwise; So far as common Observation reaches, it is easiest of all Things to make that *appear* ridiculous, which is not *really* deformed; And how should it be otherwise, while the human Imagination is liable to be imposed on, and capable of receiving *fictitious* for *real* Representations?

THE noble Author tells us next, that “nothing is Proof against Raillery, except “what is handsome and just.”---Perhaps, nor *that* neither. Though it be true, that nothing of the opposite Kind is proof against Raillery; yet sure it is a strange Mistake to imagine, that what is really handsome and just is always Proof against it. For, by fictitious Images impressed on the Fancy, what is *really* handsome and just, is often rendered *apparently* false and deformed; and thus becomes *actually* contemptible and ridiculous.

BUT “one may defy the World to turn “real Bravery and Generosity into Ridicule.” Safely, my Lord; while they retain their *native Appearance*, and Beauty of Proportion. But alas, how easy is it to *disguise* them! It is but concealing, varying,
or

or adding a Circumstance that may strike the Fancy, and they at once assume new Shapes, new Names, and Natures. Thus the *Virtues* which, seen in a direct Light, attract our Admiration by their *Beauty*; when beheld through the oblique Mediums of Ridicule start up in the Forms of *Ideots*, *Hags*, and *Monsters*.

BUT the noble Writer enforces these general Appeals to Fact, by one extraordinary Instance. He tells us, "The divinest Man who had ever appeared in the Hea-
" then World, was in the Height of witty
" Times, and by the wittiest of all Poets,
" most abominably ridiculed, in a whole
" Comedy writ and acted on Purpose: But
" so far was this from sinking his Repu-
" tation, or suppressing his Philosophy, that
" they each increased the more for it^x." It must be owned, this is an extraordinary Assertion, unless he means to affirm, that the Reputation and Philosophy of SOCRATES arose from his Blood, as "the *Christian* Sects
" sprung from the Blood of Martyrs^y." For it appears from all the Records of Antiquity, that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES was the most formidable Enemy that ever attacked

^x Vol. i. p. 31.

^y Vol. i.

SECT. VI. the divine Philosopher: This whetted the
 Rage of a *misled* Multitude, and dragged to
 Death that Virtue which hath ever since
 been the Admiration of Mankind. In this
 Opinion, we have the Concurrence of the
 first Writer of the present Age^z: And the
 Confession of another, who, although of a
 Turn conceited and fantastical enough, is
 yet of unquestioned Credit for his Inge-
 nuity and Learning. This Writer, speak-
 ing of the wild Wit of an ARISTOPHANES,
 tells us, that “ the Comedy inscribed *The*
 “ *Clouds*, is an execrable Attempt to ex-
 “ pose one of the wisest and best of Men
 “ to the Fury and Contempt of a *lewd*
 “ *Multitude*, in which it had but *too much*
 “ *Success*^a.”

’TIS true, PALMERIUS, a learned *French*
 Critic of the last Age, had, from the Num-
 ber of Years between the acting *The Clouds*
 of ARISTOPHANES, and the Death of So-
 CRATES, pretended that ÆLIAN was mis-
 taken in assigning this Play as one of the
 principal Causes of his Destruction. P.
 BRUMOY, who has wrote so excellently of
 the *Greek Theatre*, after having examined

^z Ded. to the *Div. Leg. of Moses*, p. 20.
 on *Mythology*, p. 262.

^a *Letters*

the Affair with the utmost Candour, concludes thus: "His Account (ÆLIAN's)

"seems only defective, in that he hath not
"remarked the long interval that passed be-
"tween the Representation of *The Clouds*,
"and the Condemnation of SOCRATES.
"But although the Comedy did not give
"the finishing Stroke to SOCRATES; yet it
"might have indisposed the Minds of the
"People, since these *comic Accusations* be-
"came *very serious ones*, which at length
"destroyed the wisest of the *Greeks*^b."

But since the noble Author seems to have adopted the other Opinion, and, as I am told, some shallow Mimics of modern Platonism have lately stolen PALMERIUS's Criticism, and revived this stale Pretence, of the Number of Years between the Representation of *The Clouds*, and the Death of SOCRATES; it may be necessary to transcribe the following Passage from PLATO's *Apology*, which puts the Matter beyond all Doubt: "But it

^b Son recit ne semble defectueux que pour n'avoir pas marqué le long intervalle qui se passa entre la representation des Nuees, et la condamnation de Socrate. Concluons que, bien que sa comedie n'ait pas porté le dernier coup à Socrate, elle a pu indisposer les esprits, puisque les accusations comiques devinrent des accusations tres serieuses, qui perdirent enfin le plus sage des Grecs. Tom. v. p. 360.

SECT. " is just, O *Athenians*, that I should first
 VI. " reply to the false Charge of my FIRST
 " ACCUSERS. Because several laid their
 " groundless Accusations against me, MANY
 " YEARS AGO: *whom* I DREAD MORE *than*
 " *the Adherents of ANYTUS*; though these
 " too be very powerful in Persuasion: But
 " those are still *more powerful*, who have pos-
 " sessed and sway'd you FROM YOUR VERY IN-
 " FANCY, in laying false Accusations against
 " me. Many, indeed, have been these my
 " Accusers, and LONG HAVE THEY CON-
 " TINUED thus to accuse me, and *persuaded*
 " and *mised* you at that EARLY AGE, when
 " you were MOST EASY OF BELIEF: While
 " I, in the mean Time, was without one
 " Defender. And what is worst of all, I
 " know not so much as their very Names,
 " *except only that of* THE COMEDIAN.---
 " What then do my Accusers say?---So-
 " CRATES is criminal, in that he enquires
 " too curiously concerning what is under
 " the Earth, and in the Heavens, and in
 " that he can make the worse appear the
 " better Reason; and that he teaches these
 " Things to others. Such then is the Ac-
 " cusation: *For such Things you saw in*
 " ARIS-

“ ARISTOPHANES’S COMEDY, where a ^{SECT.}
 “ fictitious SOCRATES is carried about, af- ^{VI.}
 “ firming, that he takes Journeys through
 “ the Air, and talking much more idle Stuff
 “ of the same Nature^c. ”

HERE we see, the Philosopher refers their Accusation to its *original Cause*: And this he positively affirms, was no other than the *old Impressions* made against him on the

^c Πρώτον μὲν οὖν δίκαιος εἰμι ἀπολογησασθαι, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, πρὸς τὰ πρῶτα μου ψευδῆ κατήγορημένα, καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πρῶτους κατήγορους·—ἐμοῦ γὰρ πολλοὶ κατήγοροι γέγονασι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ παλαιὰ πολλὰ ἤδη ἔτη, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς λεγόντες· οὐς ἐγὼ μᾶλλον φοβούμαι ἢ τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ἀνυτὸν, καίπερ ὄντας καὶ τούτους δεινούς· ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνοι δεινότεροι, ὦ ἄνδρες, οἱ ὑμῶν τοὺς παλλοὺς ἐκ παιδῶν παραλαμβάνοντες, ἐπειθὸν τε καὶ κατήγορον ἐμὸν οὐδὲν ἀληθὲς· ἐπεὶ αἱ εἰσὶν οὗτοι οἱ κατήγοροι πολλοὶ, καὶ πολλὴν ἤδη χρόνον κατήγορηκοί· εἰ δὲ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ λείοντες πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἐν ἡ ἀν μαλιστα ἐπιστεύσατε, παῖδες ὄντες ἐνίοι ὑμῶν καὶ μερᾶκι ἀλεχνῶς, ἐρημὴν κατήγοροντες, ἀπολογούμενου οὐδενός· ὁ δὲ πάντων ἀλόγιστον, οἷοι οὐδὲ τὰ ὀνομαῖα οἷον τε αὐτῶν εἶδεναι καὶ εἰπεῖν· πλὴν εἰς κωμωδοποιὸς τυγχάνει ὧν.—τί δὴ λέγουσιν διεβαλὼν οἱ διαβαλόντες;—Σωκράτης ἀδικεῖ, καὶ περιεργάζεται ζῆλων τὰ τε ὑπο γῆν καὶ τὰ ἐπουρανία· καὶ τὸν ἡτῶ λόγον κρεῖττω ποιεῖν· καὶ ἀλλοῖς ταῦτα διδάσκων· τοιαύτῃ τις ἐστὶ· τοιαύτα γὰρ ἐώρατε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν τῇ Αἰετοφάνου κωμῳδίᾳ, Σωκράτην τινὰ ἐκεῖ περιφερόμενον, φασκόντα τε ἀεροβαλεῖν, καὶ ἀλλήν ποτὴν φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα. Plat. Apol. Soc.

Minds

SECT. Minds of the *Athenians*, by the Comedy of
VI. THE CLOUDS^d.

So much for the Silencing, which is the only Conviction, of Obstinacy and Ignorance. But in Reality, it is a Matter of small Consequence, in the present Question, Whether the Ridicule of the comic Poet was in Fact destructive to the divine Philosopher or not. But as it demonstrably was, it is therefore a Case in Point. However, suppose it was not; what is the Consequence? Why, only this: That dishonest

^d As so much stir hath been made about the Case of *Socrates* with regard to Ridicule, it may not be amiss to shew what *his* Opinion of it was in general, when considered as a *Test of Truth*. In the fifth Book of *Plato's* Republic, *Socrates* proposes that Women should engage in all the public Affairs of Life, along with Men. This, to *Glauco*, appears *ridiculous* in some of its Circumstances. *Socrates* replies, "That may be: But let us go to the *Merits* of the Question, *setting aside all Raillery*, advising the *Railleurs* to be *serious*, and putting them in Mind, that the very Practice now approved in *Greece* (of Men appearing naked) was, not long ago, treated there with the highest Ridicule: as it is to this Day among many Barbarians."—

πορευτεον προς το τραχυ του νομου, δεηθαι τε τουτων, μη τα αυτων πραττειν, αλλα σπουδαζειν, και υπομνησασιν οτι ου πολυς χρονος εξ ου τοις Ελλησιν εδοκει αισχερον ειναι και γελοια απερ νυν τοις πολλοις των βαρβαρων, γυμνους ανδρας ορασθαι. The following Part of this Passage I would recommend to the modern Patronizers of the *Way of Ridicule*.

Ridicule

Ridicule failed of its desired Success, *in one* SECT. VI.
Instance. And how does this affect the
 Question, so long as Ten thousand other
 Instances may be alledged to the contrary,
 which no Man, that is not void of common
 Sense or common Honesty, can possibly
 deny?

FROM the Appeals to Fact, already
 made^e, may be drawn innumerable Instances
 of this Nature. There we see Truth, Wis-
 dom, Virtue, Liberty, successfully disguised
 and derided; by this very means the Cause
 of Falsehood, Folly, Vice, Tyranny main-
 tained: If to these it were necessary to add
 more; we cannot perhaps in History find a
 more flagrant Proof of the Power of Ridi-
 cule against *Virtue herself*, than in that Heap
 of *execrable Comedies*, which have been the
 Bane and Reproach of this Kingdom thro'
 a Series of ninety Years. During this Pe-
 riod, the Generality of our comic Poets have
 been the unwearied *Ministers of Vice*: And
 have done her Work with so thorough an
 Industry, that it would be hard to find one
 Virtue, which they have not *sacrificed* at her
 Shrine. As Effects once established are not
 easily removed, so not only this, but the

^e See above § 5.

succeed-

SECT. VI. succeeding Generation will probably retain the Impressions made in the two preceding ones; when Innocence was the Sport of abandoned Villany; and the *successful Adulterer* decked out with all the *Poet's Art*, at the Expence of the *ridiculed* and *injured Husband*: When moral Virtue and Religion were made the Jest of the *licentious*; and female *Modesty* was banished, to make Way for shameless *Effrontery*:

The Fair sat panting at a *Courtier's* Play,
And not a Mask went unimprov'd away:
The *modest* Fan was lifted up no more,
And Virgins *smil'd* at what they *blush'd* before^f.

SECTION VII.

SECT. VII. HERE then we have accumulated Proofs of the fatal Influences of Ridicule, when let loose from the Restraints of Reason.

YET still his Lordship insists, that "Truth, 'tis supposed, may bear all Lights^g." To which it is replied, that "Truth will indeed bear every Light, *but a false one*." He adds, that "one of those principal Lights or natural Mediums by which

^f Essay on Criticism. ^g Vol. i. p. 61.

" Things

* Things are to be viewed, in order to a SECT. VII.
 "thorow Recognition, is Ridicule itself^h."

This is full as wise a Method to manifest the Rectitude of Truth, as it would be to shew the Rectitude of a ruling Staff, to emerge one part of it in clear Water. The Staff indeed would still continue strait, but the two *Mediums*, in which it lies, though both *natural* ones, would concur to make it appear crooked. Just so it is with Truth, when half shewn by the *Medium of Reason*, and the other half, by the *Medium of Ridicule*.

BUT the noble Writer asks us, "How
 "can any one of the least Justness of
 "Thought endure a Ridicule wrong
 "placed?"---I answer, by being *mised* or
mistaken; and then Men are ready to *bear*
 any thing. Shew me him whose Imagi-
 nation never received or retained a false Im-
 pression, and I shall readily allow he can
 never *endure a Ridicule wrong placed*. But
 of this *infallible* Race I know none, except
 the Inhabitants of *Utopia*. 'Tis true, he
 candidly acknowledges, that "the *Vulgar*
 "may swallow any *sordid Jest*, any *mere*
 "Drollery and Buffoonry^k." Indeed! How

^h Vol. i. p. 61.

ⁱ Ibid. p. 11.

^k Ibid.

SECT. VII. then can he *defy the World to turn real Bravery or Generosity into Ridicule, or laugh successfully at Honesty or Good-manners?* And where was the Wonder or Improbability, that the Wit of ARISTOPHANES should incite a *lewd Multitude* to destroy the *divine Philosopher*¹?

BUT then he tells us, “It must be a finer and truer Wit that takes with the men of *Sense* and *Breeding*^m.” This Sentence it must be owned is artful enough: Because it obliges one to make a Separation that may look like *ill-natured*, before one can expose its Weakness. A truer Wit indeed may be necessary to take with the *Men of Sense*; but these, I apprehend, may sometimes be distinguished from the *Men of Breeding*: For it is certain, that in most Countries the Vulgar are a much more *considerable* Body, than is generally imagined. Yet, although neither *Reason* nor the *Passions* gain any Advantages from *high Life*,

¹ L'Impudence qu'il avoit de tourner en ridicule la religion, devoit être reprimée: car une refutation serieuse ne fait pas à beaucoup près tant de mal, que les railleries d'un homme d'esprit. Les *jeunes gens* se laissent gater par ces sortes de moqueurs plus que l'on ne scauroit dire. Bayle, art. BION.

^m Vol. i. p. 11.

it must be owned, the Imagination acquires a certain *Delicacy*, which the *low Vulgar* are generally Strangers to. The coarse Pranks of a *merry Andrew* that engage the Attention of a *Country Fair*, would make but a poor Figure at *St. James's*. But still it is only in the *Modes*, not the Objects of Ridicule, with regard to which the *Courtier* differs from the *Clown*. The *Peasant* and his *Lord* are equally susceptible of false Impressions; equally liable to have Falsehood obtruded on them for Truth, Folly for Wisdom, Vice for Virtue: The Methods only of Ridicule, the Engines of Deceit must vary; must be accommodated to the different Views of Things and Circumstances of Life, among which they have respectively been conversant. Thus it must indeed be a *finer*, but by no means a *truer* Kind of Wit, that takes with the *Men of Breeding*.

THE noble Writer proceeds to ask,
 “ What Rule or Measure is there in the
 “ World, except in the considering the real
 “ Temper of Things, to find which are
 “ truly serious, and which ridiculous? And
 “ how can this be done, unless by applying

SECT. VII. "the Ridicule, to see whether it will
 "bearⁿ?"---Yes sure, there is another Rule:
 The Rule of Reason: Which alone can distinguish Appearances from Realities, and fix the true Nature of Things: From whose Determinations alone, we ever can distinguish true from pretended Gravity, just from groundless Raillery. But the Way of Investigation here proposed by his Lordship, inverts the very Order and Constitution of Things: By this means Appearances take the Place of Realities; Imagination usurps the Sovereignty which belongs to Reason; and RIDICULE IS MADE THE TEST OF WHAT IS RATIONAL, INSTEAD OF REASON BEING MADE THE TEST OF WHAT IS RIDICULOUS.

YET still the noble Author suspects ill Consequences: That Subjects "may be very
 "grave and weighty *in our Imagination*, but
 "very ridiculous and impertinent in their
 "own Nature^o." True: and on the other hand, Things may appear ridiculous and impertinent *in our Imagination*, which are very grave and weighty in their own Nature. What then is the Consequence in either Case? Why, only this: That *Ima-*

^a Vol. i. p. 12.

^o Ibid p. 11.

gination,

gination, and therefore *Ridicule* which de- SECT. VII.
pends upon it, can never be a *Test* of Truth.

BUT his Lordship insists, that "Gravity
"is of the very *Essence* of *Imposture* ^P." Yet this will do little for his Purpose, unless he can prove too, that "Imposture is
"of the *Essence* of Gravity." And if so, what will become of the *Enquiry concerning Virtue*? Gravity, it is true, is commonly an Attendant of Imposture: And so is Laughter, generally speaking, of Folly. With as much Reason therefore as the noble Writer infers from hence, that Gravity is Imposture, we may infer that Laughter is Folly in Disguise. In Truth, the Inference is groundless, in both Cases. Though every Knave should affect Gravity, yet every grave Man is not a Knave: Though every Fool will be Laughing, yet every Man that laughs is not a Fool: We may be serious and honest, as well as merry and wise. Mirth and Gravity are both harmless Things, provided they be properly applied: And we have seen that it is the Province of Reason alone, to determine when they are so.

BUT after all, the Proposition, that *Gravity is of the Essence of Imposture*, is false:

^P Vol. i. p. 11.

F 3

It

SECT. VII. It is only an occasional, though, indeed, a pretty close, attendant, since this other Maxim was taken for granted, that *Reason was the Test of Truth*. Let once his Lordship's be generally embraced, that *Ridicule* is so, and we should soon see *Buffoonry* as close an Attendant on Imposture as now *Gravity*. The Tryal has been made; and successfully enough too, by him who has kept the Multitude in Opinion for twenty Years together; and by this Time, perhaps, himself, that Learning and Religion are better taught in his Conventicle, than in all the Universities and Churches of *Christendom* put together. And sure if any thing be the *Essence* of his *Imposture*, it is *Buffoonry*.

AND here let us not forget to observe, that the noble Writer often (as in the Passage last cited) confounds *Mirth*, *Urbanity*, or *Good-humour*, with *Raillery* or *Ridicule*: Than which, no two Things in Nature are more diametrically opposite. The first, as it ariseth solely from *sudden* and *pleasing Resemblances* impressed on the Imagination, is justly regarded by all, as the best *Mediator* in every Debate. The last, as it ariseth solely from *Contempt*, is therefore no less justly regarded by most, as an *Embroider* and *Incendiary*.

Incendiary. He sets out with a formal Profession of proving the Efficacy of Humour and Ridicule in the Investigation of Truth: Yet, by shifting and mixing his Terms, he generally slides insensibly into mere Encomiums on *Good-breeding, Chearfulness, Urbanity, and free Enquiry*; and then, from these Premises, often draws Consequences in Favour of *Ridicule*, as if it were an *equivalent Term*. This indeed keeps something like an Argument on Foot, and misleads the superficial Reader.

BUT the noble Author triumphs in another Observation: When speaking of *modern Zealots*, he tells us, that “whatever
“they think grave and solemn, they suppose must never be treated out of a grave
“and solemn Way. Though what another
“thinks so, they can be contented to treat
“otherwise: And are forward to try the
“Edge of Ridicule against any Opinions be-
“sides their own^a.” Now, if this be so; how is *Gravity of the Essence of Imposture*, as he had before affirmed? But whatever becomes of that Proposition, the Remark is just. And whomsoever he means to Compliment with the Name of *Zealots*, whe-

^a Vol. i. p. 60.

SECT. VII. ther in Religion or Freethinking, I shall
 not compliment as Exceptions to the Truth of it. There is scarce a Topic of Religion, either for its Dishonour or Support, that hath not been exposed to the illiberal Jokes of some Bungler in Controversy. And a much coarser Advocate in the Cause of Ridicule^r, hath wrote an elaborate and most tedious Dissertation, to prove that the Way of Raillery hath been successfully applied by every Sect of Religionists and Infidels, to the Destruction of each other's Tenets, and the Establishment of their own. How he gains his Conclusion, that an Engine which tends to fix Mankind in their preconceived Opinions, and establish so many Species of Error, is of Importance and Efficacy in the Search of Truth, may not be so easy to determine. In the mean time, in Reply to his whole Treatise, as well as to the last mentioned Remark of our noble Author, it may be sufficient to observe, that Mankind often retain their own, and oppose others' Opinions, from an imperfect View of the Nature of Things: Their peculiar Tenets in Religion, as in other Subjects, are often founded in Imagination only: Their Ob-

^r Supposed to be Mr. Collins.

jections

jections to those of others are often as groundless and fanciful. How natural then is it for them to communicate their Opinions on that Foundation on which they received them? How natural, that they should throw the Colours of Imagination on the Tenets they oppose? That they should obtrude the like fictitious Images on others, which themselves have embraced as Truth? That they should hold forth Appearances for Realities; employ Eloquence instead of Logick; and endeavour to *persuade* whom they should, but cannot, *convince*?

It seems therefore that his Lordship's Observation (which contains the Quintessence of his Associate's Work, and which probably was the *Leaven* that *leavened* the whole *Lump* of Malice and Dulness) instead of being favourable to Ridicule as a Test of Truth, can only tend to disgrace it. For since every religious and unbelieving Sect hath *alike successfully* employed it in supporting their respective Tenets, and in rendering those of their Adversaries contemptible; it follows, inasmuch as Doctrines which are essentially repugnant cannot all be true, that

RIDICULE IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL

SECT. FUL ENGINES, BY WHICH ERROR CAN BE
 VII. MAINTAINED AND ESTABLISHED.

SECTION VIII.

SECT. WE shall only mention one more of the
 VIII. noble Writer's Arguments in Favour of his new *Test*: But it is, indeed, the very *Key-Stone* of this visionary Arch, which he hath with such fantastic Labour thrown over the Depths of Error, in order to invite Mankind over it as a short and secure Passage to the Abode of Truth and Wisdom.

HE tells us, that a new Species of Enthusiasts (*French Prophets*) having lately risen up among us, " We have delivered
 " them over to the cruellest Contempt in
 " the World. I am told for certain, that
 " they are at this very Time the Subject
 " of a choice Droll or Puppet-show at
 " Bart'lmy-Fair.---And while Bart'lmy-
 " Fair is in Possession of this Privilege, I
 " I dare stand Security to our national
 " Church, that no Sect of Enthusiasts,
 " no new Venders of Prophecy or Mira-
 " cles, shall ever get the Start, or put her
 " to the Trouble of trying her Strength
 " with them, in any Case."

Vol. i. p. 27, 28.

So

So far, for Peace sake, we venture to SECT. VIII.
agree with the noble Writer: But now
comes a finishing Stroke indeed.

FOR he proceeds to congratulate the present Age, that in the Beginnings of the Reformation, when Popery had got Possession, *Smithfield* was used in a more *tragical Way*. And that “had not the Priests, as is usual, “preferred the Love of Blood to all other “Passions, they might in a *merrier Way*, “perhaps, have *evaded the greatest Force of “our reforming Spirit*.”

AND now, for Form's sake, let us suppose the noble Author to be what he assumes, a Friend to Religion and Reformation: Under this Character, he recommends *Ridicule* to us, as of sovereign Use to investigate Truth, try Honesty, and unmask formal Hypocrisy and Error. To prove this Use, he tells us, what we should least have expected, that if, instead of the tragical Way of *Smithfield*, the *Romish* Priests had preferred the comic Drollery of Bart'lmey-Fair, they had perhaps gained their Point, and *evaded the greatest Force of our reforming Spirit*. Here the noble Writer forgets his Part, which is that of a *Believer* and a *Pro-*

SECT. VIII.
testant.

But, in his Scarcity of Proofs for the *Use* of Ridicule, he has put the Change upon us, and perhaps upon himself, and offered at one to shew its *Force*: Which, without doubt, must wonderfully recommend it to the Favour of all sober Men. Here then lies the Dilemma: Let his Followers then get him off as they can. If their Master be a Believer, he has reasoned ill; if a Freethinker, he has managed worse. Had he been a little more knowing in the Times he speaks of, he might have found an Instance more pertinent to his Argument, and more conformable to his Character; an Instance which shews, not what *Ridicule* might be supposed capable of doing, but what it actually effected. And this not to stop *Reformation*, but to discredit *Popery*. Bishop BURNET tells us, that in the Year 1542, "Plays and Interludes" were a great Abuse: In them, Mock-Representations were made, both of the Clergy and of the Pageantry of their Worship. The Clergy complained much of these as an Introduction to Atheism, when Things sacred were thus laughed at: And said, they that begun to laugh at Abuses, would not cease till they had re-

"presented

“ *presented* all the Mysteries of Religion as SECT. VIII.
 “ *ridiculous*: The graver Sort of Re-
 “ formers did not approve of it: But poli-
 “ tical Men encouraged it; and thought
 “ nothing could more *effectually pull down*
 “ the Abuses that yet remained, than the
 “ exposing them to the *Scorn* of the Na-
 “ tion.”

THIS curious Piece of History is remarkable; and tends no less to support our general Argument, than to recommend, what the noble Writer is pleased to sneer at, the Sobriety of our *reforming Spirit*. *Political* men, says the Historian, whose Business, and therefore whose aim, was to *persuade*, encouraged the Way of Ridicule: But the *graver Sort of Reformers*, whose nobler Ministry, and consequently whose purpose, was to *convince*, did not *approve* of it.

BUT his Lordship is so fond of his Reflection, that he pushes it still further. “ I
 “ never heard (says he) that the ancient
 “ Heathens were so well advised in their *ill*
 “ *Purpose* of suppressing the *Christian Re-*
 “ *ligion* in its first Rise, as to make use at
 “ any Time of this Bart’lmy-Fair Method.

“ *History of the Reformation, A. D. 1542.*

“ But

SECT. VIII. "But this I am persuaded of, that, had *the Truth of the Gospel* been any way *surmountable*, they would have bid much fairer for the silencing it, if they had chosen to bring our primitive Founders upon the Stage in a pleasanter Way, than that of Bear-Skins and Pitch-Barrels^w." And as to the *Jews*, he says, that "with all their Malice and Inveteracy to our Saviour and his Apostles after him, had they but taken the Fancy to act such Puppet-Shows in his *Contempt*, as at this Hour the Papists are acting in his Honour; I am apt to think they might possibly have done our Religion more harm, than by all their other Ways of Severity^x."

WHAT a Favourite is that *facetious Droll of Wood and Wire, the Bart'lmey Fair Hero*, with these modern Advocates for Mirth and Raillery! And indeed, not without cause, for of him they seem to have learnt their very wittiest Practices. Who taught them to turn their Backs upon their Betters; to disturb the most serious Scenes with an unfavoury Joke; and make a Jest of the Devil? Indeed they have so well taken off his Manners, that one Description will serve

^w Vol. i. p. 29.^x Ibid.

them

them both. And whether you suppose the fine one which follows to be meant of the *original*, or one of the *Copies* you are equally sure you have a good Likeness.

SECT.
VIII.

Sed præter reliquos incedit *Homuncio, rauca*
Voce strepens;—*Pygmæum* territat agmen
Major, et immanem *miratur turba gigantem*.
Hic magna fretus mole, imparibusque lacertis
Confusus, gracili *jaçtat convitia vulgo*,
Et crebro solvit (*lepidum caput!*) ora *cachinno*.
Quanquam res agitur solenni *seria pompa*,
Spernit sollicitum intractabilis ille tumultum,
Et *risu* importunus adest, atque *omnia turbat* y.

BUT to return to our Argument. Be you well assured of this, kind Reader, that whatever Impressions are made upon a Populace in the Way of *Scenery* and *dramatic Representation*, are no more than so many Kinds of *silent Eloquence* and *Persuasion*: That Facts which ought to be proved, are always *taken for granted*, and Things and Persons often rendered *apparently absurd*, which *really* are not so. That *the Vulgar* (both *high* and *low*) are *apt to swallow any sordid Jest or Buffoonry*, so it be but accommodated to their *preconceived Opinions*: That this Way of Ridicule, like every other,

y *Musæ Angl.* MACH. GEST. by Mr. Addison.

as

SECT. as it is fairly or dishonestly applied, will
 VIII. sweep away Truth or Falsehood without
 Distinction: That it will confound *French*
Prophets with *English Reformers*, and on
 the same false Foundation establish the
 Truths of Protestantism, or the Absurdities
 of Popery. That as *Virtue* herself cannot
 bear up against a Torrent of Ridicule, so
 neither can *Religion*: That therefore *Christi-*
anity had indeed more to fear from the
contemptuous Misrepresentations, than the
bitterest Rage of its Enemies: That *Christi-*
anity did in Fact endure this more than fiery
 Trial: That its divine Founder was *de-*
rided^z as well as *crucified*: That they who
 in succeeding Times suffered for the Faith,
 endured *cruel Mockings* no less than *Scourg-*
ings, *Bonds*, and *Imprisonment*: That many
 a brave Martyr offered up his Prayers to
 Heaven, that he might be released by Death
 from the *Contempt* of his Enemies: And af-
 ter being *baited* in the *Bear-Skin*, found a
Refuge in the *Faggot*, or the *Pitch-Barrel*.

SECTION IX.

SECT. 'HOWEVER, the noble Writer's Mo-
 IX. desty must not be forgotten. For while he

^z *Prophecy unto us, who it was that smote thee!*

might

might have arrogated to himself the Glory of this wondrous Discovery, he hath informed us of an *ancient Sage*, whose Idea of Ridicule coincided with his own. “ ’Twas the Saying of an ancient Sage, that “ Humour was the only Test of Gravity^a.”

THE Reader will probably be surprized to find that the Passage here referred to by the noble Writer, is no other than what hath been already quoted from ARISTOTLE^b as a Direction to the Conduct of an Orator. ’Tis likewise remarkable, that his Lordship, in quoting the original Passage in his *Margin*, has, by the *prudent* Omission of an emphatical Expression, converted it from a particular Rule of Rhetoric into a general Maxim of Philosophy^c. But ’tis of all most remarkable, that in his pretended Translation, he hath entirely perverted the Sense of the Author, whose Authority he attempts to build upon.

“ As Ridicule (says the great Philosopher) seems to be of some Use in Pleading; it was the Opinion of GORGIAS,

^a Vol. i. p. 74.

^b See above, p. 43.

^c The Words, τῶν ἐναντίων — *Adversariorum* — are omitted.

SECT. IX. "that you ought to confound your Adversary's serious Argument by Raillery, and his Raillery by serious Argument." This is almost a literal Translation of the Passage. But how the noble Author could so far impose upon himself or others, as to strip it of its native Dress, and disguise it under the fantastical Appearance of a Maxim, "that Humour is the only Test of Gravity, and Gravity of Humour,"---this is not so easy to account for.

HOWEVER this came to pass, 'tis certain, that the Observation, as it lies in ARISTOTLE, is a just and a fine one: as it lies in the noble Writer's maimed Translation, it is *false*, if not *unmeaning*.

THAT an Orator should *confound his Adversary's Raillery by serious Argument*, is rational and just. By this means he tears off the false Disguises of Eloquence, and distinguisheth real from apparent Truth. That he should *confound his Adversary's serious Argument by Raillery*, is, if not a just, yet a legal Practice. The Aim and End of the Advocate or Orator is Persuasion only; to Truth or Falsehood as it happens. If he hath Truth on his Side, it is likely what he will have then to do, will be *to confound his Adversary's*

Adversary's Raillery by serious Argument. SECT. IX.

If Truth be against him, he will be forced to change Weapons with his Adversary, whose serious Argument he must try to confound by Raillery. This is all the Mystery there is in the Matter? By which we see, that whenever in this case Ridicule is opposed to Reasoning, it is so far from being the *Test* or Support, that it is the *Destruction* of *Truth*. And the judicious QUINTILIAN fairly confesses it, where he assigns the Cause why Ridicule is of such mighty Force in Oratory--- "Quia animum ab intentione rerum frequenter avertit"--- *Because it draws off the Mind from attending to the real Nature of Things.* Thus you see the Propriety and Beauty of the *Saying of our ancient Sage*, when fairly represented.

BUT as the noble Writer hath translated the Passage, it is a Curiosity indeed. "Humour is the only Test of Gravity, and Gravity of Humour." He applies it not to Eloquence, but Philosophy; not to Persuasion, but Conviction. And so, by the strangest Conversion in Nature, makes the Trier, and the Thing tried, each in their turns, become Agent and Patient to one another. But what Artist ever attempted to

SECT. IX. *try* the Justness of his *Square* or *Level*, by the Work which he has formed by the Assistance of those Instruments? Or was ever the Gold which hath been put to the Test, reciprocally applied to *try* the Touch-Stone? If therefore *Gravity*, or Reasoning, be the Test of *Humour*; *Humour* never can be the Test of *Gravity*: As on the other hand, if *Humour* be the Test of *Gravity*, then *Gravity* can never be the Test of *Humour*.

SINCE therefore this *see-saw* Kind of Proof returns into itself, and consequently ends in an Absurdity; 'tis plain, that one half of the noble Writer's Proposition must effectually destroy the other: Let us see then, which *Moiety* deserves to be supported. His own Comment on the Passage will help us to determine. Which however, he seems desirous his Reader should receive as a Part of the *Saying of his ancient Sage*: But whoever will turn to the Passage, as it lies in ARISTOTLE, will find that GORGIAS is entirely innocent of the whole Affair.

"GRAVITY, says his Lordship, is the
 "Test of *Humour*: Because a Jest that will
 "not bear a serious Examination, is cer-
 "tainly false Wit." True: here we have a
 rational

rational Test established. Next he inverts the Proposition, sets it with its Head downwards, like a Traytor's Scutcheon, and now, says he, behold "Humour is the Test of Gravity." To prove this, Reason requires he should have added, "Because an Argument, which can be successfully ridiculed, is certainly false Logic." But this was too hardy a Proposition to be directly advanced: He therefore contents himself with hinting, that "a Subject which will not bear Raillery is suspicious!" Now we know, that *Suspicion* is often groundless: That what is suspected to be false, may yet be true. So that the noble Writer again suffers this new Test to slip through his Fingers, even while he is holding it up to your Admiration. But if any thing further be necessary to clear up this Point, it may be observed in short, that Gravity or Argument is the Test of Humour, because Reason marks the real Differences of Things: That Humour can never be the Test of Gravity, because Imagination can only suggest their apparent Analogies.

THUS the Sentiment of GORGIAS is grossly mistaken or designedly misrepresented by the noble Writer: as it lies in

SECT. ARISTOTLE, it is rational and consistent;
 IX. as it is taken up by his Lordship, it is chimerical and groundless.

It might have been difficult to assign a Reason, why the noble Writer should have attempted to establish this *two-fold* Method of Proof, had not he explained his Intention in another Place. He there^d wisely recommends the old *scholastic Manner* to the Clergy, as being most suitable to their Abilities and Character: The *Way of Ridicule* he appropriates to the Men of Taste and Breeding; declaring it ought to be kept sacred from the impure Touch of an Ecclesiastic. For as Clubs and *Cudgels* have long been appropriated to Porters and Footmen, while every Gentleman is ambitious to understand a *Sword*; so the clumsy Way of *Argumentation* is only fit for Priests and Pedants, but *pointed Wit* is the Weapon for the Man of Fashion: This decides a Quarrel *handsomely*. The *pretty Fellow* is at your Vitals in a Moment; while the Pedant keeps labouring at it for an Hour together, and neither gets nor gives so much as a broken Bone.

^d Vol. iii. Misc. v. c. 2. § 65, &c.

BUT

BUT still higher is the noble Writer's Idea of Wit and Ridicule: While he applies it not only to *Conquest*, but *Investigation*: And we must own, it was an Attempt worthy of his Genius, to establish this new and *expeditious* Method of Search and Conviction. In which, by the sole Application of so cheap and *portable an Instrument* as that of *Raillery*, a Gentleman might obtain the certain Knowledge of the *true Proportion* of Things, without the tedious and vulgar Methods of *Mensuration*. In the mean Time, we, whom the noble Author hath so often condescended to distinguish by the honourable Title of Formalists and Pedants, finding ourselves incapable of this *sublime* Way of Proof, must be content to drudge on in the old and beaten Track of *Reasoning*. And after all, 'tis probable this new Attempt will succeed no better than the curious Conceit of the *learned Taylor* in *Laputa*: Who being employed in making a *Suit* for the facetious GULLIVER; disdained the *vulgar Measures* of his Profession, and took that Gentleman's *Altitude* by the Help of a *Quadrant*. This, it must be acknowledged, was a Theory no less sublime than our noble Author's: Yet it

SECT. failed miserably when applied to Practice:
 IX. For the sagacious Traveller informs us, that notwithstanding the Acuteness and Penetration of the Artist, his cloaths were *wretchedly ill made.*

SECTION X.

SECT. WE have now obviated every thing ma-
 X. terial, that the noble Writer hath advanced in Support of his new System. But as one of his most zealous Followers hath undertaken *in Form* to explain and defend his Notions on this Subject^e, it may be proper to examine how far this Gentleman's Argument is consistent with Truth.

He tells us, that "to ask whether Ridicule be a Test of Truth, is in other Words to ask, whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming, can be ridiculous."

HERE, as the Foundation of all, we see the same Kind of Ambiguity lurking, as was observed in the noble Writer, in the Passage already remarked on^f. For if by "that

^e See a Note on the *Pleasures of Imagination*, a Poem. Book iii.

^f See above, p. 55.

" which

“which is ridiculous,” he means that which SECT. X. is *really* ridiculous, it is allowed this can never be morally true: But this is so far from proving Ridicule to be a Test of Truth, that it implies the contrary: It implies some further Power, which may be able to distinguish what is *really* ridiculous, from what is only *apparently* so. On the contrary, if by “that which is ridiculous,” he means that which is *apparently* ridiculous, it may be affirmed, this may be morally true: Because Imagination and Passion often take up with Fictions instead of Realities, and can never of themselves distinguish them from each other. He tells us his Question “does not deserve a serious Answer.” At least it wanted an Explanation.

THE Gentleman proceeds: “For it is
 “most evident, that as in a metaphysical
 “Proposition offered to the Understanding
 “for its Assent, *the Faculty of Reason* ex-
 “amines the Terms of the Proposition, and
 “finding one Idea which was supposed
 “equal to another, to be in Fact unequal,
 “of Consequence rejects the Proposition as
 “a Falsehood: So in Objects offered to the
 “Mind for its Esteem or Applause, the
 “*Faculty of Ridicule* feeling an Incongruity
 “in

SECT. "the Claim, urges the Mind to reject it
X. "with Laughter and Contempt."

HERE the *Faculty of Reason* is excluded from the Examination of moral Truths, and a new Faculty, never before heard of, the *Faculty of Ridicule*, is substituted in its Place. Now, when a *Stranger* is introduced into good Company, and sure these can be no better than the *Public*, it is usual not only to tell his Name, but *what he is*, and what his *Character*: This, the Gentleman hath not condescended to do: 'Tis true, in a preceding Page he tells us, that "the Sensation of Ridicule is not a bare Perception of the Agreement or Disagreement of Ideas; but a *Passion or Emotion of the Mind, consequential to that Perception.*" In another Place he expressly calls it "a gay Contempt." Now, if the *Faculty of Ridicule* be the same as the *Sensation of Ridicule*, or a *gay Contempt*, then by substituting the plain old Term of *Contempt*, instead of the *Faculty of Ridicule*, we shall clearly see what the above cited Passage contains. "As in a metaphysical Proposition, the *Faculty of Reason* examines the Terms, and rejects the Falsehood; so in Objects offered to the Mind for its Esteem and Applause,

“plause, *the Passion of Contempt* feeling an SECT.
X.

“Incongruity in the Claim, urges the Mind

“to reject it *with Laughter and CON-*

“TEMPT!”---Why was not honest *Reason*

admitted of the Council, and set on the

Seat of Judgment, which of right belongs

to her? The Affair would then have stood

thus: “As in a metaphysical Proposition,

“the Faculty of Reason examines the

“Terms, and rejects the Falsehood; so in

“Objects offered to the Mind for its Esteem

“or Applause, *the same Faculty of Reason*

“finding an Incongruity in the Claim, urges

“the Mind to reject it *with Contempt and*

“*Laughter.*” This would have been Sense

and Argument; but then it had not been

Characteristical.

WE shall now clearly discover the Dis-

tinction that is to be made on the following

Passage: “And thus a double Advantage is

“gained: For we both *detect* the moral

“Falsehood *sooner* than in the Way of spe-

“culative Enquiry, and impress the Minds

“of Men with a stronger Sense of the Va-

“nity and Error of its Authors^g.”---Here

’tis evident, that the Design “of *detecting*

“the moral Falsehood *sooner* than in the

^g Ibid. p. 106.

“Way

SECT. X. "Way of speculative Enquiry" is an absurd Attempt: But that "to impress the
 "Minds of Men with a stronger Sense of
 "the Vanity and Error of its Authors,"
 when Reason hath made the proper Search,
 is both a practicable and a rational Inten-
 tion.

"BUT it is said, continues he, that the
 "Practice is dangerous, and may be incon-
 "sistent with the Regard we owe to Ob-
 "jects of real Dignity and Excellence^h." Yet this is but a secondary Objection: The principal one is, *that the Attempt is absurd*. However, the Circumstance of Danger is not without its Weight: Nor is the Gentleman's reply at all sufficient --- "that the
 "Practice fairly managed can never be dan-
 "gerous." For though Men are not dishonest in obtruding false Circumstances upon us, we may be so *weak* as to *obtrude* them upon ourselves. Nay, it can hardly be otherwise, if, instead of exerting our Reason to correct the Suggestions of Fancy and Passion, we give them an unlimited Range, and acquiesce in their partial or groundless Representations, without calling in Reason to decide upon their Truth or Falsehood.

^h Ibid. p. 106.

By

By this means we shall often “ view Ob-
 “ jects of real Dignity and Excellence,” in SECT.
X.
 such Shapes and Colours as are foreign to
 their Nature; and then sit down and laugh
 most profoundly at the Phantoms of our
 own creating.

BUT still he insists, that though false Cir-
 cumstances be imposed upon us, yet “ the
 “ Sense of Ridicule always *judges right*,”
 or in more vulgar Terms, “ The Passion of
 “ Contempt always judges right.” Whereas,
 in Truth, it never *judges* at all; being equal-
 ly excited by Objects real or imaginary that
 present themselves.

OBSERVE therefore what a Number of
new Phrases and *blind* Guides this of Ridi-
 cule, if once admitted, would bring in upon
 us, and all on equal Authority. For with
 the same Reason, as the Passion of Contempt
 is styled the *Sense of Ridicule*, the Passion of
Fear may be called the *Sense of Danger*, and
Anger the *Sense of Injury*. But who hath
 ever dreamt of exalting these Passions into so
 many Tests of the Reality of their respective
 Objects? The Design must have been re-
 jected as absurd, because it is the Province
 of Reason alone, to correct the blind Sal-
 lies of every Passion, and fix it on its proper
 Object.

SECT. X. Object. Now, the Scheme of Ridicule is of the same Nature. It proposes the Passion of Contempt as the Test of moral Falsehood, which, from the very Terms, appears to be a Project full as wise, as to make Fear the Test of Danger, or Anger the Test of Injury.

THE Gentleman proceeds next to the Case of SOCRATES. He owns "the SOCRATES of ARISTOPHANES is as truly ridiculous a Character as ever was drawn: But it is not the Character of SOCRATES, the divine Moralist and Father of ancient Wisdom."---No indeed: and here lay the Wickedness of the Poet's Intention, and the Danger of his Art: in imposing Fictions for Realities on the misled Multitude; and putting a Fool's Coat on the Father of ancient Wisdom. 'Tis true, the People laughed at the *ridiculous Sophist*; but when the ridiculous Sophist came to drink the Poison, what think you became of the Father of ancient Wisdom?

BUT then he tells us, that as the comic Poet introduced foreign Circumstances into the Character of SOCRATES, and built his Ridicule upon these; "So has the Reasoning of SPINOZA made many Atheists; he

“ he has founded it indeed on Suppositions SECT.
 “ utterly false, but allow him these, and his X.
 “ Conclusions are unavoidably true. And
 “ if we must reject the Use of Ridicule,
 “ because, by the Imposition of false Cir-
 “ cumstances, things may be made to seem
 “ ridiculous, which are not so in them-
 “ selves; why we ought not to reject the
 “ Use of Reason, because, by proceeding on
 “ false Principles, Conclusions will appear
 “ true which are impossible in Nature, let
 “ the vehement and obstinate Declaimers
 “ against Ridicule determineⁱ.”

BUT why so much Indignation against *Declaimers* in one who writes in Defence of *Ridicule*, a Species of *Declamation*? Then as to *rejecting* the Use of Ridicule, a very material Distinction is to be made: As a *Mode of Eloquence* nobody attempts totally to reject it, while it remains under the Dominion of Reason: But as a *Test of Truth*, I hope the Reader hath seen sufficient Reason totally to reject it.

NEITHER will the Parallel by any means hold good, which the Gentleman hath attempted to draw between the Abuse of *Ridicule* and *Reason*. Because the Imagina-

ⁱ Page 106.

tion,

SECT.
X.

tion, to which the Way of Ridicule applies, is apt to form to itself innumerable fictitious Resemblances of Things which tend to confound Truth with Falsehood: Whereas the natural Tendency of Reason is to separate these apparent Resemblances, and determine which are the *real*, and which the *fictitious*. Although therefore SPINOZA hath advanced many Falsehoods in the Way of speculative Affirmation, and founded his Reasonings on these, yet still Reason will be her own Correctress, and easily discover the Cheat. But if the Imagination be impressed with false Appearances, and the Passion of Contempt strongly excited, neither the *Imagination* nor the *Passion* can ever correct themselves; but must inevitably be misled, unless Reason be called in to rectify the Mistake, and bring back the Passion to its proper Channel.

NAY, so far is the Use of Ridicule, when prior to rational Conviction, from being parallel to Reason, or co-operative with it; that, on the contrary, it hath a strong Tendency to prevent the Efforts of Reason, and to confound its Operations. It is not pretended that human Reason, though the *ultimate*, is yet in all Cases an *adequate* Test of Truth: It is always fallible, often erroneous:

ous: But it would be much less erroneous, SECT.
X.
were every Mode of Eloquence, and Ridicule above all others, kept remote from its Operations; were no Passion suffered to blend itself with the Researches of the Mind. For Ridicule, working on the Imagination and Passions, disposes the Mind to receive and acquiesce in any Opinion without its proper Evidence. Hence Prejudice arises; and the Mind, which should be *free* to examine and weigh those *real* Circumstances which PROVE SOCRATES to be indeed a divine Philosopher, is drawn by the *prior* Suggestions of *Ridicule* to receive and acquiesce in those false Circumstances, which PAINT him as a *contemptible Sophist*.

To conclude: 'Tis no difficult Matter to point out the Foundation of this Gentleman's Errors concerning Ridicule. They have arisen solely from his mistaking *the Passion of Contempt* for a *judicial Faculty*: Hence all those new-fangled Expressions of---“the Faculty of Ridicule”---“the “Sense of Ridicule”---and “the feeling “of the Ridiculous:” In the Use of which he seems to have imposed upon himself new Phrases for Realities, and Words for Things. I cannot better illustrate this Remark, than

H

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by

SECT. X. by transcribing a Passage from the incomparable LOCKE.---“ Another great Abuse
 “ of Words is, the taking them for Things.
 “ To this Abuse Men are most subject,
 “ who confine their Thoughts to any one
 “ System, and give themselves up to the
 “ firm Belief of the Perfection of any received Hypothesis; whereby they come
 “ to be persuaded, that the Terms of that
 “ Sect are so suited to the Nature of Things,
 “ that they perfectly correspond with their
 “ real Existence. Who is there that has
 “ been bred up in the Peripatetic Philosophy, who does not think the ten Names,
 “ under which are ranked the ten Predicaments, to be exactly conformable to the
 “ Nature of Things? Who is there of that
 “ School, that is not persuaded, that *substantial Forms, vegetative Souls, Abhorrence*
 “ *of a Vacuum, intentional Species, etc.* are
 “ something real?”---“ There is scarce any
 “ Sect in Philosophy has not a distinct Set
 “ of Terms that others understand not.
 “ But yet this *Gibberish*, which, in the
 “ Weakness of human Understanding, serves
 “ so well to palliate Men’s Ignorance, and
 “ cover their Errors, comes by familiar Use
 “ amongst those of the same Tribe, to seem
 “ the

“the most important Part of Language, and
 “of all other the Terms the most signifi-
 “cant^k.” And now to save the Trouble
 of Repetition, the Reader is left to deter-
 mine how far “the *Faculty of Ridicule*
 “feeling the Incongruity”---and “the *Sense*
 “of *Ridicule* always judging right”---may
 with Propriety be placed among the learned
Gibberish above-mentioned.

SECT.
X.

’Tis strange this Gentleman should have
 erred so widely in so plain a Subject; when
 we consider, that he hath accidentally
 thrown out a Thought, which, if pursued,
 would have led him to a full View of the
 Point debated: “The Sensation of Ridi-
 “cule is not a bare *Perception* of the Agree-
 “ment or Disagreement of Ideas; but a
 “*Passion* or *Emotion* of the Mind conse-
 “quential to that *Perception*^l.”

SECTION XI.

TO return therefore to the noble Wri-
 ter. As it is evident, that *Ridicule* cannot
 in general without Absurdity be applied as
 a Test of Truth; so can it least of all be

SECT.
XI.

^kLocke on *Hum. Understanding*, B. iii. c. 10. § 14.
^lP. 103.

SECT. XI. admitted in *examining Religious Opinions*, in the Discussion of which, his Lordship seems principally to recommend it. Because, by inspiring the contending Parties with *mutual Contempt*, it hath a violent Tendency to destroy *mutual Charity*, and therefore to prevent *mutual Conviction*.

To illustrate this Truth, let us consider the following Instance, which seems clear and full to the Point.

THERE is not perhaps in any Language a bolder or stronger Ridicule, than the well-known Apologue of *The Tale of a Tub*. Its manifest Design is to recommend the *English Church*, and to disgrace the two Extremes of *Papery* and *Puritanism*^m. Now, if we

^m Some indeed have pretended otherwise. Thus Mr. Wotton, in his *Reflections on Learning*, says, "It is a designed Banter upon all that is esteemed sacred among Men." And the pious Author of the *Independent Whig* affirms it was "the sole open Attack that had been made upon Christianity since the Revolution, except the *Oracles of Reason*, and was not inferior in Banter and Malice, to the Attacks of *Celsus*, or *Julian*, or *Porphyry*, or *Lucian*." p. 399. Where by the Way, the Oddity of the Contrast is remarkable enough; that he should pronounce the *Tale of a Tub* to be a *Libel on Christianity*, while it is in Fact a *Vindication of our Ecclesiastical Establishment*; and at the same Time entitle his own Book a *Vindication of our Ecclesiastical Establishment*, while in Fact it is a *Libel on Christianity*.

consider this exquisite Piece of Raillery as a Test of Truth, we shall find it impotent and vain: For the Question still recurs, whether MARTIN be a just Emblem of the *English*, *Jack* of the *Scotch*, or *Peter* of the *Roman Church*. All the Points in Debate between the several Parties are taken for granted in the Representation: And we must have Recourse to *Argument*, and to that alone, ere we can determine the Merits of the Question.

SECT.
XI.

IF we next consider this Master-piece of Wit as a Mode of *Eloquence*, we shall find it indeed of great *Efficacy* in confirming every Member of the *Church of England* in his own Communion, and in giving him a thorough Dislike of those of *Scotland* and *Rome*: And so far as this may be regarded as a Matter of *public Utility*, so far the Ridicule may be laudable.

BUT if we extend our Views so as to comprehend a larger Plan of *moral Use*; we shall find this Method of Persuasion is such, as Charity can hardly approve of: For by representing the one of these Churches under the Character of *Craft and Knavery*, the other under that of *incurable Madness*, it must needs tend to inspire every Member

SECT. of the *English* Church who believes the Re-
 XI. presentation, with such *Hatred* of the one,
 and *Contempt* of the other, as to prevent all
friendly Debate and *rational Remonstrance*.

ITS effect on those who hold the Doctrines of CALVIN, or of *Rome*, must be yet worse: Unless it can be proved, that the Way to attract the Love, and convince the Reason of Mankind, is to shew that we hate or despise them. While they revere what we deride, 'tis plain, we cannot *both* view the Subject in the same Light: And though we deride what appears to us *contemptible*, we deride what to them appears *sacred*. They will therefore accuse us of misrepresenting their Opinions, and abhor us as *unjust* and *impious*.

THUS although this noted Apologue be indeed a Vindication of our *English* Church, yet it is such as had been better spared: Because its natural Effect is to create Prejudice, and inspire the contending Parties with mutual Dislike, Contempt, and Hatred.

BUT if the Way of Ridicule is thus wholly to be rejected in treating every *controverted* Subject; it will probably be asked, "Where then is it to be applied? Whether
 " it is reasonable *to calumniate and blacken*

" it

“ *it without Distinction?* And whether it is
 “ not Impiety, thus *to vilify the Gifts of our*
 “ *Maker?*”

SECT.
 XI.

AND 'tis certain, that to do this, were absurd and impious. As on the other hand, there is an equal Absurdity and Impiety in confounding that Order of Things which the Creator hath established, and endeavouring to raise a *blind Passion* into the *Throne of Reason*. One Party or other in this Debate hath certainly incurred the Censure: The Censure is severe, and let it fall where it is deserved. I know none that endeavour to vilify and blacken Ridicule without Distinction, unless when it presumes to elevate itself into a *Test of Truth*: And then, as a Rebel to the Order and Constitution of Nature, it ought to be resolutely encountered and repelled, till it take Refuge in its own inferior Station.

THE proper Use of Ridicule therefore is, “ to disgrace *known* Falsehood:” And thus, negatively at least, “ to enforce *known* “ Truth.” Yet this can only be affirmed of certain Kinds of Falsehood or Incongruity, to which we seem to have appropriated the general Name of *Folly*: And among the several Branches of this, chiefly

SECT. I think, to AFFECTATION. For as every
XI. *Affectation* arises from a false Pretence to
Praise, so a *Contempt* incurred tends to con-
vince the Claimant of his *Error*, and thus
becomes the natural Remedy to the Evil.

MUCH more might be said on this Head.
We might run through numerous Divisions
and Subdivisions of *Folly*: But as the Task
would be both insignificant and endless, I
am unwilling to trouble the Reader with
such elaborate Trifles.

IT seems an Observation more worthy of
our Attention and Regard; that *Contempt*,
whence Ridicule arises, being a *selfish Passion*,
and nearly allied to *Pride*, if not absolutely
founded on it; we ought ever to keep a
strict Rein, and in general rather curb than
forward its Emotions. Is there a more im-
portant Maxim in Philosophy than this, that
we should gain a Habit of controuling our
Imaginations and Passions by the Use of
Reason? Especially those that are rather of
the selfish than the benevolent Kind? That
we should not suffer our Fears to sink us in
Cowardice, our Joys in Weakness, our An-
ger in Revenge? And sure there is not a
Passion that infects human Life, whose Con-
sequences are so generally pernicious as those
of

of *indulged Contempt*. As the common SECT.
XI.
Occurrences of Life are the Objects which
afford it Nourishment, so by this means it is
kept more constantly in Play, than any other
Affection of the Mind: And is indeed the
general Instrument by which Individuals,
Families, Sects, Provinces, and Nations, are
driven from a State of mutual Charity, into
that of Bitterness and Dissention. We pro-
ceed from Raillery to Railing; from Con-
tempt to Hatred. Thus if the Love of Ri-
dicule be not in itself a Passion of the male-
volent Species, it leads at least to those
which are so. Add to this, that the most
ignorant are generally the most contemptu-
ous; and they the most forward to *deride*,
who are most incapable or most unwilling
to *understand*. Narrow Conceptions of
Things lead to groundless Derision: And
this Spirit of Scorn in its Turn, as it cuts us
off from all Information, confirms us in our
preconceived and groundless Opinions.

THIS being the real Nature and Ten-
dency of Ridicule, it cannot be worth while
to descant much on its Application, or ex-
plore its Subserviency to the Uses of Life.
For though under the severe Restrictions of
Reason, it may be made a proper Instru-
ment

SECT.
XI.

ment on many Occasions, for disgracing *known Folly*; yet the Turn of Levity it gives the Mind, the Distaste it raises to all candid and rational Information, the Spirit of Animosity it is apt to excite, the Errors in which it confirms us when its Suggestions are false, the Extremes to which it is apt to drive us, even when its Suggestions are true; all these conspire to tell us, it is rather to be wished than hoped, that its Influence upon the whole can be considerable in the Service of *Wisdom and Virtue*.

LORD SHAFTESBURY himself, in many other Parts of his Book, strongly insists on the Necessity of bringing the Imagination and Passions under the Dominion of Reason. "The only Poison to *Reason*, says he, is *Passion*: For *false Reasoning* is soon redressed, where *Passion* is removedⁿ." And it is difficult to assign any Cause that will not reflect some Dishonour on the noble Writer, why he should thus strangely have attempted to privilege this Passion of *Contempt* from so necessary a Subjection. Let it suffice, in Conclusion, to observe; that Inconsistencies must ever arise and be persisted in, when a roving Fancy, con-

ⁿ *Wit and Humour*, Part ii. § 1.

ducted

conducted by *Spleen* and *Affectation*, goes in SECT.
Quest of idle Novelties, without subjecting XI.
itself to the just Restraints of *Reason*.

UPON the whole: This new Design of
discovering Truth by the *vague* and *un-*
steady Light of Ridicule, puts one in Mind
of the honest *Irishman*, who applied his
Candle to the *Sun-Dial*, in order to see how
the Night went.

ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY II.

On the Obligations of Man to Virtue, and the Necessity of religious Principle.

HAVING considered the noble Writer's two first Treatises, so far as they regard the *Use of Ridicule*, we now come to his *Soliloquy*, or *Advice to an Author*. And here, bating only a few accidental Passages, which will be occasionally pointed out hereafter, we shall have little more to do, than to approve and admire: The whole Dissertation being, in its general Turn, one continued

S E C T I.

SECT. I. continued Instance of its Author's Knowledge and refined Taste in Books, Life, and Manners. I could dwell with Pleasure on the Beauties of this Work, if indeed they needed an Explanation: But that noble Union of Truth and Eloquence which shines through the whole, as it supersedes, so it would disgrace any Attempt of this Kind. To the Work itself therefore I recommend the Reader.

THE noble Writer having thus prepared us for the Depths of Philosophy, by enjoining an unfeigned and rigorous *Self-Examination*; proceeds to that highest and most interesting of all Subjects, *The Obligations of Man to the Practice of Virtue*. And here it will probably appear, that with a Variety of useful Truths, he hath blended several plausible Mistakes, which, when more nearly viewed, seem to be attended with a Train of very extraordinary Consequences. What he hath given us on this Subject, lies chiefly in the two Treatises, which compose his second Volume: But as he frequently refers us to the other Parts of his Writings, where he hath accidentally treated the same Points in a more explicit Manner; so the same Liberty of comparing one Passage with another,

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. III

ther, will, I apprehend, be judged reasonable by the candid Reader. Thus we shall more effectually penetrate into his true Scope and Intention; and draw off, as far as may be, that Veil of *Mystery*, in which, for Reasons best known to himself, he hath so often wrapped his Opinions.

SECT.

I.

SECTION II.

'TIS no uncommon Circumstance in Controversy, for the Parties to engage in all the Fury of Disputation, without precisely instructing their Readers, or truly knowing themselves, the Particulars about which they differ. Hence that fruitless Parade of Argument, and those opposite Pretences to Demonstration, with which most Debates, on every Subject, have been infested. Would the contending Parties first be sure of their own Meaning (a Species of Self-Examination which, I think, the noble Writer hath not condescended to mention) and then communicate their Sense to others in plain Terms and Simplicity of Heart, the Face of Controversy would soon be changed: And real Knowledge, instead of imaginary Conquest, would be the noble Reward of literary Toil.

SECT.

II.

IN

SECT.
II.

IN the mean Time, a History of *Logomachies*° well executed, would be no unedifying Work. And in order to open a Path to so useful an Undertaking, I will venture to give the present Section as an Introduction to it: For sure, among all the Questions which have exercised the Learned, this concerning *the Obligations of Man to Virtue* hath given Rise to the greatest Profusion of loose Talk and ambiguous Expression. The Argument hath been handled by several of great Name: And it might possibly be deemed Presumption to differ from any of them, had they not so widely differed among themselves. Much hath been said, and various have been their Opinions concerning our *Obligations to Virtue*; but little hath been said in any definitive Manner, on the previous and fundamental Question, *What Virtue is*. By which I do not mean, what Actions are called Virtuous, for, about that, Mankind are pretty well agreed, but, *what makes Virtue to be what it is*. And till we have determined this with all possible Precision, we cannot determine “ upon what Foundation Man-

° A Strife about Words.

“ kind

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 113

"kind are obliged to the Practice of it." SECT.
II.
Our first Enquiry therefore must be, concerning the *Nature of Virtue*: In the Investigation of which, the Moralists of most Ages seem to have been remarkably defective.

LET us first consider what our noble Author hath said on this Subject. He tells us, "The Mind cannot be without its Eye
"and Ear; so as to discern Proportion, distinguish Sound, and scan each Sentiment
"and Thought which comes before it. It
"can let nothing escape its Censure. It
"feels the soft and harsh, the agreeable
"and disagreeable in the Affections; and
"finds a *foul* and *fair*, an *harmonious* and a
"dissonant, as really and truly here, as in
"any musical Numbers, or in the outward
"Forms and Representations of sensible
"Things. Nor can it withhold its Admiration and Extasy, its Aversion and Scorn,
"any more in what relates to one, than to
"the other of these Subjects. So that to
"deny the common natural Sense of a
"*sublime* and *beautiful* in Things, will appear an *Affectation* merely to any one
"who considers duly of this Affair^p." The

^p *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, Part iii. § 3.

SECT. II. Perception of this Beauty he calls the *moral Sense* or *Taste*; and affirms, that Virtue consists in “a perfect Conformity of our Affections and Actions with this supreme Sense and Symmetry of Things.” Or, to use his own Words, “The Nature of Virtue consists in a certain just Disposition or proportionable Affection of a rational Creature towards the *moral Objects* of *Right and Wrong*.”

THE next Writer I shall mention is the learned and amiable Dr. CLARKE. He thinks it necessary to reject this Idea of Virtue, which the noble Writer had established; and as a surer Foundation, than what mere *Affection, Sense, or Taste* could produce, lays the Basis of Virtue in *Reason*: And insists, that its true Nature lies in “a Conformity of our Actions, with certain eternal and immutable Relations and Differences of Things. That from these, which are necessarily perceived by every rational Agent, there naturally arise certain *moral Obligations*, which are of themselves incumbent on all, antecedent to all positive Institution, and to all Expectation of Reward or Punishment.”

^a *Inquiry concerning Virtue*, Part iii. § 1. ^r Clarke's *Demonst.* passim.

AFTER

AFTER these, comes an ingenious and candid Writer, and in Opposition to both these Schemes of Moral, fixes the Nature of Virtue in "a Conformity of our Actions with *Truth*." He affirms, that "no Act, whether Word or Deed, of any Being, to whom moral Good and Evil are imputable, that interferes with any *true* Proposition, or *denies* any thing to be as it is, can be *right*. That, on the contrary, every Act is right which does not contradict Truth, but treats every thing as being "what it is^s."

There are, besides these, several other philosophical Opinions concerning the Nature of Virtue: as, that it consists in following *Nature*---in avoiding all *Extremes*---in the Imitation of the *Deity*. But these are still more loose and indeterminate Expressions, if possible, than the former. If therefore the first should appear vague and ineffectual, the latter must of Course fall under an equal Censure.

Now it will appear, that all the three Definitions of Virtue, which Lord SHAFTESBURY, Dr. CLARKE, and Mr. WOLLASTON have given us, in designed Opposition to

^s Wollaston's *Rel. of Nat.* § 1. passim.

SECT. II. each other, are equally defective; "Be-
 " cause they do not give us any more parti-
 " cular or determinate Ideas, than what we
 " have from that *single Word*, which with
 " so much fruitless Labour they attempt to
 " define."

LET us first examine the noble Writer's Definition in this View. He says, that
 " Virtue consists in a Conformity of our Af-
 " fections with our natural Sense of the
 " Sublime and Beautiful in Things, or with
 " the moral Objects of Right and Wrong."
 ---Now, what new Idea do we gain from
 this pompous Definition? Have we not the
 same general Idea from the Word *Virtue*, as
 from the more diffused Expression of *the*
Sublime and Beautiful of Things? And can-
 not we gather as much from either of these,
 as from the subsequent Phrase, the *moral*
Objects of Right and Wrong? ---They are
 all general Names, relative to something
 which is yet unknown, and which is no
 more explained by the pretended Definition,
 than by the Word which is attempted to
 be defined. Indeed, when his Lordship
 further affirms, that to relieve the Needy, or
 help the Friendless, is an Instance of this
 Sublime and Beautiful of Things, we then
 obtain

obtain a more determinate Idea, with Re-^{SECT.}
gard to that particular Case. But still we ^{II.}
are as much as ever at a Loss for a general
Criterion or *Test*, by which the Virtue of our
other Actions is to be determined. To say,
therefore, that Virtue consists in acting ac-
cording to the *fair*, the *handsome*, the *sub-*
lime, the *beautiful*, the *decent*, the *moral Ob-*
jects of *Right* and *Wrong*, is really no more
than ringing Changes upon Words. We
might with equal Propriety affirm, "that
" *Virtue* consists in *acting virtuously*." This
Deficiency Mr. WOLLASTON clearly saw.
" They, says he, who reckon nothing to be
" (*morally*) good, but what they call *ho-*
" *nestum*, may denominate Actions accord-
" ing as that is, or is not the Cause or End
" of them: But then, what is *honestum*?
" Something is still wanting to measure
" Things by, and to separate the *honest*
" from the *inhonest*."

DR. CLARKE'S Definition seems not to
include any thing more precise or determi-
nate, than the noble Writer's. He affirms,
that " Virtue consists in a Conformity of our
" Actions with right Reason, or the eter-
" nal and immutable Relations and Dif-

¹ *Rel. of Nat.* p. 22.

118 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. II. "ferences of Things." Here then a parallel Question ariseth, "What is *right Reason*, and what these *eternal Relations* which are affirmed, by the learned Writer, to be the Test or Criterion of Virtue?" And 'tis observable, that when he comes to prove the Truth and Reality of these *Relations*, he is forced to resolve it into a *self-evident* Proposition. "These Things, saith he, are so notoriously plain and *self-evident*, that nothing but the extremest Stupidity of Mind, Corruption of Manners, or Per- verseness of Spirit, can possibly make any Man entertain the least Doubt concerning them^v." Thus too, his ingenious *Advocate*, when pushed by his Adversary to declare, whether he perceives the Truth of these Relations by *Proof* or *Intuition*, confesses "they may be looked upon as *self-evident*^w." Here then we may observe a strong Coincidence between the noble Writer's System of Expression, and this of Dr. CLARKE: For as the one affirms, that the *Sublime* and *Beautiful* of Things is *self-evident*, so the other affirms the same of the *Fit* and *Reasonable*. And as the *Sublime* and

^v *Demonst.* p. 50.
Mor. Goodness, p. 10.

^w Balguy's *Traëts*, 2^d Part of

Beautiful

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 119

Beautiful give us no more determinate Ideas, SECT. II.
than the *Virtuous*, so neither can we obtain
any additional Information from the *Fit* and
Reasonable. We are equally at a Loss to
know what is *fit* and *reasonable*, as to know
what is *virtuous*: Therefore the *one* can ne-
ver be an adequate Definition of the other.
Here too, Mr. WOLLASTON plainly saw the
Want of Precision. As to those, he saith,
“ who make *right Reason* to be a Law ---
“ it is true, that whatever will bear to be
“ tried by right Reason, is right; and that
“ which is condemned by it, wrong:---But
“ the Manner in which they have delivered
“ themselves, *is not yet explicit enough*. It
“ leaves Room for so many Disputes and
“ *opposite right Reasons*, that nothing can be
“ settled, while every one pretends that *his*
“ Reason is right*.”

Now it will doubtless appear a Circum-
stance of Singularity, that Mr. WOLLAS-
TON, who saw the essential Defects of these
two Definitions, should himself offer a *third*,
which is precisely liable to the same Ob-
jection. “ Virtue, saith this learned Wri-
“ ter, consists in a Conformity of our
“ Actions with Truth; in treating every

* *Rel. of Nat.* p. 23.

120 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. II. "thing as being what it is." Well: be it so. Yet the Question still recurs, what is *moral Truth*? And this demands a *Definition* no less than *Virtue*, which was the Thing to be defined. Had Lord SHAFTESBURY lived to see this new Theory proposed, how naturally would he have retorted Mr. WOLASTON's Objection? "You, Mr. WOLASTON, reckon nothing to be *morally Good*, but what you call *Truth*: And you may indeed denominate Actions, according as that is, or is not, the Cause or End of them: But then, what is *Truth*? Something further is still wanting to measure Things by, and to separate *Truth* from *Falseness*."---Thus too would Dr. CLARKE have naturally replied: "'Tis true, that whatever will bear to be tried by *Truth*, is right; and that which is condemned by it, wrong: But the Manner in which you have delivered yourself, is not yet explicit enough. You have rather confounded my Definition, than given a new one of your own: All that you have added, is an Impropriety of Speech. I speak of the *Rectitude* of Actions, you of the *Truth* of Actions; which I call an Impropriety of Speech, because

“ because *Truth* relates to *Affirmations*, not SECT.
 “ to *Actions*; to what is *said*, not to what II.
 “ is *done*. But supposing the Propriety of
 “ your Expression, what further Criterion
 “ have you gained? You confess, that *Truth*
 “ is discovered by *Reason* only; for you
 “ say, that to *deny Things to be as they are*,
 “ is the *Transgression of the great Law of our*
 “ *Nature, the Law of Reason*’. If so, then
 “ Reason is as good a Guide as Truth:
 “ We can as certainly know what is *right*
 “ *Reason*, as what is *Truth*. If therefore
 “ my Definition is defective, yours must be
 “ so too. If mine leaves Room for so many
 “ Disputes and *opposite right Reasons*, that
 “ nothing can be settled, while every one
 “ pretends that his Reason is *right*; yours
 “ must of Necessity be liable to the same
 “ Objection, must leave Room for so many
 “ Disputes and *opposite Truths*, that nothing
 “ can be settled, while every one pretends
 “ that his Idea of *Truth* is the *right* one.
 “ Truth, then, can never be a better Cri-
 “ terion than Reason, because our Idea of
 “ *Truth* must always *depend* upon our
 “ *Reason*.”

’ *Rel. of Nat.* p. 15.

THUS

SECT.

II.

THUS it should seem, that our three celebrated Writers have not given the Satisfaction which might have been expected in an Affair of such philosophical Importance. Their common Attempt is to define the Nature, or fix the Criterion of Virtue: To this End, the first affirms, it consists in a Conformity of our Actions to the *Fair* and *Handsome*, the *Sublime* and *Beautiful* of Things: The Second, the *Fitness*, *Reasons*, and *Relations* of Things: The Third, the *Truth* of Things. But inasmuch as these general Terms of *Beauty*, *Fitness*, *Truth*, convey not any more determinate Idea, than that of *Virtue*, which they are brought to define; the several pretended Definitions are therefore *inadequate* and *defective*².

² Let it be observed once for all, that the Definitions here censured as defective, are little more than direct Transcripts of what the old *Greek* Philosophers, and *Tully* after them, have said on the same Subject. To shew how generally this Kind of Language infects the Writers on Morality, we need only transcribe the following Passage from a Follower of the noble Writer. “ We need not therefore be at a Loss, said he, for a “ *Description* of the sovereign Good.—We may call it “ *Rectitude* of Conduct.—If that be too contracted, we “ may enlarge, and say, ’tis — to live perpetually selecting and rejecting according to *the Standard of our Being*. If we are for still different Views, we may say, ’tis “ — to live in the Discharge of *Moral Offices* — to live

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 123

WHAT then is *Virtue*? Let us consider SECT.
II.
its true Nature in the following Section.

SECTION III.

THERE are few among Mankind, who SECT.
III.
have not been often struck with Admiration at the Sight of that Variety of Colours and Magnificence of Form, which appear in an Evening *Rainbow*. The *uninstructed* in Philosophy consider that splendid Object, not as dependent on any other, but as being possessed of a *self-given* and *original Beauty*. But he who is led to know, that its Place and Appearance always varies with the Situation of the *Sun*; that when the latter is in his Meridian, the former becomes an inconsiderable Curve skirting the Horizon; that as the Sun descends, the *Rainbow* rises; till at the Time of his *Setting*, it encompasses the Heavens with a glorious Circle, yet *dies* away when he *disappears*; the Enquirer is then convinced, that this gay Meteor did but shine

“ according to Nature — To live according to *Virtue* —
“ to live according to *just Experience* of those Things
“ which happen around us.” Three Treatises by
J. H. Treat. 3^d. p. 207.

with

SECT. with a *borrowed* Splendor, derived from the
 III. Influence of that mighty *Luminary*.

THUS, in like Manner, though the *Beauty*, *Fitness*, *Truth*, or VIRTUE, of all those Actions which we term *morally Good*, seem at first View to reside in the several Actions, in an original and independent Manner; yet on a nearer Scrutiny we shall find, that, properly speaking, their Nature ariseth from their *Ends* and *Consequences*; that as these *vary*, the Nature of the several Actions *varies* with them; that from these alone, Actions gain their *Splendor*, are denominated *morally Good*, and give us the Ideas of *Beauty*, *Fitness*, *Truth*, or *Virtue*.

THE first Proofs in Support of this Opinion shall be drawn from those very Writers who most zealously oppose it. And here 'tis first remarkable, that "while they attempt to fix their several *Criteria* of absolute, independent *Beauty*, *Fitness*, and *Truth*; they are obliged to admit *Exceptions*, which effectually destroy what they design to establish." The following Instance, from one of these celebrated Writers, is equally applicable to the other two.

MR.

MR. WOLLASTON speaks in the following SECT.
III.
Manner: "To talk to a Post, or otherwise
" treat it as if it was a Man, would surely
" be reckoned an *Absurdity*, if not *Dis-*
" *traction*. Why? Because this is to treat
" it as being what it is not. And why
" should not the converse be reckoned as
" bad; that is, to treat a Man as a Post?
" As if he had no Sense, and felt not In-
" juries which he doth feel; as if to him
" Pain and Sorrow were not Pain; Happi-
" ness not Happiness^a." Now, you see
that on his Scheme of absolute irrelative
Truth, the Absurdity of *talking to a Post* is
precisely of the same Nature with that of
injuring a Man: For in both Cases, we
treat the Post and the Man, as being *what*
they are not. Consequently, on this Philo-
sophy, if it be morally Evil to *injure a Man*,
'tis likewise morally Evil to *talk to a Post*.
Not that I suppose Mr. WOLLASTON would
have maintained this Consequence. He
knew that the First of these Absurdities
would only deserve the Name of *Folly*;
that the latter, of a *Crime*. As therefore he
allows that Truth is equally violated in
either Case; as there is something *highly*

^a *Rel. of Nat.* p. 15.

SECT. III. *immoral* in the one, and *nothing immoral* in the other, here is an Exception which overturns his Principle: which proves that the Morality or Immorality of Actions depends on something *distinct* from mere abstract, irrelative *Truth*.

THE same Exception must be admitted on Dr. CLARKE's System of Expression. For sure, 'tis neither *fit* nor *reasonable*, nor agreeable to the Relations of Things, that a Man should talk to a Post. Yet, although it be admitted as *irrational* and *absurd*, I do not imagine, any of Dr. CLARKE's Defenders would say it was *immoral*. So again, with regard to Lord SHAFTESBURY, 'tis clear there can be nothing of the *Sublime* or *Beautiful* in this Action of talking to a Post: On the contrary, there is (to use his own Manner of Expression) an apparent Indecency, Impropriety, and *Dissonance* in it. Yet, although his Admirers might justly denominate it *incongruous*, they would surely be far from branding it as *vile*. Here then the same Exception again takes place, which demonstrates that *Virtue* cannot consist either in *abstract Fitness* or *Beauty*; but that something further is required in order to constitute its Nature.

POSSIBLY

POSSIBLY therefore, the Patrons of these SECT. III. several Theories may alledge, that Actions which relate to *inanimate Beings* only, can properly be called no more than *naturally* beautiful, fit, or true: But that *moral* Fitness, Beauty, or Truth, can only arise from such Actions as relate to Beings that are *sensible* or *intelligent*. Mr. BALGUY expressly makes this Exception: He affirms, that “moral Actions are such as are knowingly directed towards some Object intelligent or sensible^b.”

AND so far indeed this Refinement approaches towards the Truth, as it excludes all *inanimate* Things from being the Objects of moral Good and Evil. Yet even this Idea of moral Beauty, Fitness, or Truth, is highly indeterminate and defective: Because innumerable Instances may be given, of Actions directed towards Objects sensible and intelligent, some of which Actions are manifestly *becoming*, *fit*, or *true*, others as manifestly *incongruous*, *irrational*, and *false*, yet none of them, in any Degree, *virtuous* or *vicious*, *meritorious* or *immoral*. Thus to speak to a Man in a Language he understands, is an Action *becoming*, *fit*, or *true*;

^b *First Treat. on Moral Goodness*, p. 28.

SECT.
III.

'tis treating him according to the Order, Relations, and Truth of Things; 'tis treating him according to *what he is*. On the contrary, to speak to him in a Language he understands not, is an Action neither *becoming, fit, nor true*; 'tis treating him according to *what he is not*; 'tis treating him *as a Poet*. But although the first of these Actions be undeniably becoming, fit, or true, who will call it *Virtue*? And though the latter be undeniably incongruous, irrational, and false, who will call it *Vice*? Yet both these Actions are directed towards a Being that is sensible and intelligent. It follows therefore, that an Action is not either morally Good or Evil, merely because it is conformable to the Beauty, Fitness, or Truth of Things, even though it be directed towards an Object both *sensible and intelligent*; but that something still further, some more distinguishing and characteristic Circumstance is necessary, in order to fix its real Essence.

WHAT this peculiar Circumstance may be, we come now to enquire. And the first Lights in this Enquiry shall be borrowed from these very celebrated Writers, whom we have here ventured to oppose.

For

For such is the Force and Energy of Truth, SECT.
III.
that while they are attempting to involve her in a Cloud of Metaphysics, she breaks through the mystic Veil they had prepared and woven for her with so much Art, and diffuseth a Stream of genuine Lustre, which the most obdurate Prejudice can only withstand by winking hard.

AND first, though the *noble* Writer every where attempts to fix an original, independent, moral Beauty of Action, to which every thing is to be referred, and which itself is not to be referred to any thing further^c: Yet when he comes to an Enumeration of those *particular* Actions, which may be called morally Beautiful, he always singles out such as have a direct and necessary Tendency to *the Happiness of Mankind*. Thus he talks of the Notion of a *public Interest*^d, as necessary towards a proper Idea of Virtue: He speaks of public Affection in the same Manner; and reckons Generosity, Kindness, and Compassion, as the Qualities which alone can render Mankind truly Virtuous. So again, when he fixes the Bounds of the social Affections, he evidently refers

^c *Essay on Wit — Soliloquy — Enquiry — Moralists — Miscellanies — passim.* ^d *Enqu. B. i. p. 2. § 3.*

SECT. us to the same End, of human Happiness.

III.

“ If Kindness or Love of the most natural
 “ Sort be immoderate, it is undoubtedly
 “ vicious. For thus over-great Tenderneſs
 “ *destroys the Effect of Love* ; and exceſſive
 “ Pity renders us incapable of giving Suc-
 “ cour^e.” When he fixes the proper De-
 grees of the *private Affections*, he draws his
 Proof from this one Point, “ that by
 “ having the Self-Paſſions too intense or
 “ ſtrong, a Creature becomes miſerable^f.”
 Laſtly, when he draws a Catalogue of ſuch
 Affections, as are moſt oppoſite to Beauty
 and moral Good, he ſelects “ *Malice, Hatred*
 “ *of Society---Tyranny---Anger---Revenge*
 “ *---Treachery---Ingratitude^g*.” In all theſe
 Inſtances, the Reference to human Happi-
 neſs is ſo particular and ſtrong, that from
 theſe alone an unprejudiced Mind may be
 convinced, that the Production of *human*
Happineſs is the great univerſal Fountain,
 whence our Actions derive their *moral*
Beauty.

THUS again, though the excellent Dr.
 CLARKE attempts to fix the Nature and
 Eſſence of Virtue in certain Differences,
 Relations, and Fitneſſes of Things, to which

^e *Enqu.* B. i. p. 2. § 3.

^f *Ibid.*

^g *Ibid.*

our Actions ought ultimately to be referred; yet in enumerating the several Actions which he denominates *morally Good*, he mentions none, but what evidently promote the same great End, “the Happiness of Man.” He justly speaks of the *Welfare* of the *Whole*, as being the *necessary* and most *important* Consequence of *virtuous* Action. He tells us, “that it is *more fit* that God should regard “the *Good* of the *whole* Creation, than that “he should make the Whole continually “miserable: That all Men should endeavour to promote the *universal Good* and “*Welfare* of all; than that all Men should “be continually contriving the *Ruin* and “*Destruction* of all^b.” Here again, the Reference is so direct and strong to *the Happiness of Mankind*, that even from the Instances alledged by the worthy Author, it appears, that a Conformity of our Actions to this great End, is the very Essence of *moral Rectitude*.

MR. WOLLASTON is no less explicit in this particular: For in every Instance he brings, *the Happiness* of Man is the single End to which his Rule of Truth verges in an unvaried Manner. Thus in the Passage

^b *Demonst.* p. 45, &c.

132 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. already cited, though he considers the *talk-*
 III. *ing to a Post* as an *Absurdity*, he is far from
 condemning it as an *immoral* Action: But
 in the same Paragraph, when he comes to
 give an Instance of the Violation of *moral*
 Truth, he immediately has recourse to *Man*;
 and not only so, but to the *Happiness* of
 Man. “Why, saith he, should not the
 “Converse be reckoned as bad; that is, to
 “treat a *Man* as a *Post*; as if he had no
 “Sense, and felt not *Injuries*, which he doth
 “feel; as if to him *Pain* and *Sorrow* were
 “not *Pain*; *Happiness* not *Happiness*.” At
 other Times he affirms, that “the *Impor-*
 “tance of the Truths on the one and the
 “other Side should be diligently *compared*¹.”
 And I would gladly know, how one Truth
 can be more important than another, un-
 less upon this Principle, and in Reference
 to the *Production of Happiness*. Himself
 indeed confirms this Interpretation, when
 he speaks as follows: “The Truth violated
 “in the former Case was, B had a Property
 “in that which gave him such a Degree of
 “*Happiness*: That violated in the latter was,
 “B had a Property in that which gave him
 “a *Happiness* vastly *superior* to the other:

¹ *Rel. of Nat.* p. 19.

“The

“The Violation *therefore* in the latter Case SECT.
III.
“was *upon this Account* a vastly greater
“Violation than in the former^k.”

THESE Evidences may seem sufficient; But that all possible Satisfaction may be given in a Circumstance which is of the greatest Weight in the present Question, these further Observations may be added.

As therefore these celebrated Writers give no Instances of moral Beauty, Fitness, or Truth, but what finally relate to the Happiness of Man; so if we appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, we shall see that the Idea of Virtue hath never been universally affixed to any Action or Affection of the Mind, unless where this Tendency to produce Happiness was at least *apparent*. What are all the Black Catalogues of Vice or moral Turpitude, which we read in History, or find in the Circle of our own Experience, what are they but so many Instances of *Misery produced*? And what are the fair and amiable Atchievements of *Legislators, Patriots, and Sages* renowned in Story, what but so many Efforts to raise Mankind from Misery, and establish the public Happiness on a sure Foundation?

^k *Rel. of Nat.* p. 21

134 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. III. The first are *vicious, immoral, deformed*, because there we see Mankind *afflicted* or *destroyed*: The latter are *virtuous, right, beautiful*, because here we see Mankind *preserved* and *assisted*.

BUT that *Happiness* is the last Criterion or Test, to which the moral Beauty, Truth, or Rectitude of our Affections is to be referred, the two following Circumstances *demonstrate*: First, “those very Affections and “Actions, which, in the ordinary Course of “Things, are approved as virtuous, do “change their Nature, and become vicious “in the strictest Sense, when they contradict this fundamental Law, of the greatest “public Happiness.” Thus, although in general it is a Parent’s Duty to prefer a Child’s Welfare, to that of another Person, yet, if this natural and just Affection gain such Strength, as to tempt the Parent to violate the *Public* for his Child’s *particular* Welfare; what was before a *Duty*, by this becomes immoderate and *criminal*. This the noble Writer hath allowed: “If Kindness “or Love of the most natural Sort be *immoderate*, it is undoubtedly *vicious*¹.” And hence, he says, “the Excess of motherly

¹ *Enq. on Virtue.*

“ Love

“ Love is owned to be a vicious Fond-^{SECT.}
“ nefs^m. The same *Variation* takes Place ^{III.}
with regard to every other Relation between
Man and Man. Infomuch, that the supe-
rior Regards which we owe to our Family,
Friends, Fellow-Citizens, and Countrymen
---Regards which, in their proper Degree,
aspire to the amiable and high Names of
domestic Love, Friendship, Patriotism ---
when once they desert and violate the grand
Principle of *universal Happiness*, become a
vicious Fondness, a mean and odious *Parti-*
ality, justly stigmatized by all, as ignomini-
ous and *unworthy*.

SECONDLY, with such uncontrouled Au-
thority does this great Principle command
us; that “ Actions which are in their own
“ Nature, most shocking to every *humane*
“ Affection lose at once their moral Defor-
“ mity, when they become subservient to
“ the general Welfare; and assume both
“ the Name and the Nature of Virtue.”
For what is more contrary to every gentle
and kind Affection that dwells in the hu-
man Breast, than to shed the Blood, or de-
stroy the Life of Man? Yet the ruling Prin-
ciple above-mentioned, can reconcile us

^m *Eng. on Virtue.*

136 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. III. even to *this*. And when the Necessity of public Example compels us to make a Sacrifice of this Kind; though we may lament the *Occasion*, we cannot condemn the *Fact*: So far are we from branding it as *Murder*, that we approve it as *Justice*: and always defend it on this great Principle alone, *that it was necessary for the public Good*.

THUS it appears, that those Actions which we denominate Virtuous, Beautiful, Fit, or True, have not any absolute and independent, but a relative and reflected Beauty: And that their Tendency to produce Happiness is the only Source from whence they derive their Lustre. Hence therefore we may obtain a just and adequate Definition of Virtue: Which is no other than “ the ⁿ Conformity of our Affections with the

ⁿ The Gentlemen above examined seem to have mistaken the *Attributes* of Virtue for its *Essence*. Virtue is procuring Happiness: To procure Happiness is *beautiful, reasonable, true*; these are the Qualities or Attributes of the Action: But the Action itself, or its *Essence*, is procuring Happiness.

The Reader who is curious to examine further into this Subject, may consult the *Prelim. Dissert. to Dr. LAW's Translation of KING's Origin of Evil*: Together with several Passages in the Translator's *Notes*, where he will find *Sense* and *Metaphysics* united in a very eminent and extraordinary Degree.

“ public

“ public Good:” Or “ the voluntary Pro-
“ duction of the greatest Happiness.”

S E C T.
III.

S E C T I O N IV.

IT may possibly seem strange that so much has been thought necessary to be op-
posed to these metaphysical *Refinements* con-
cerning the Nature of Virtue: But in Rea-
lity, 'tis a Point of the utmost Consequence:
For these Refinements have given rise to a
plausible Objection, which hath been re-
tailed in a popular Manner by a late wordy
Writer; whose least merit it is to have sup-
plied our modish Coffee-house Philosophers
with such a Variety of fashionable Topics,
that they have never felt the least Want of
that antiquated Assistance derived from
Knowledge, Parts, and Learning.

THIS Gentleman, taking Advantage of
these metaphysical Refinements, and parti-
cularly of the noble Writer's imaginary
Scheme of *absolute, irrelative* Beauty, “ the
“ Hunting after which (he elegantly af-
“ firms) is not much better than a wild
“ Goose Chase °;” attempts from hence to
demonstrate, for the *Benefit* of his Country,

° *Fable of the Bees*, vol. i. p. 380. oct. Ed.

that

SECT. that we are utterly mistaken, when we
 IV. "look upon Virtue and Vice as permanent
 "Realities, that must ever be the same in
 "all Countries and all Ages^p;" And thus
 he prosecutes his Argument.

THE Worth or Excellence of every thing,
 he says, varies according to Fancy or Opin-
 ion. "Even in human Creatures, what
 "is beautiful in one Country, is not so in
 "another.---Three hundred Years ago,
 "Men were shaved as closely as they are
 "now; since that, they have wore Beards.
 "---How mean and comical a Man looks,
 "that is otherwise well-dressed, in a narrow-
 "brimed Hat, when every Body wears
 "broad ones: And again, how monstrous
 "is a very great Hat, when the other Ex-
 "treme has been in Fashion for a considera-
 "Time?---The many Ways of laying out
 "a Garden judiciously are almost innumera-
 "ble; and what is called Beautiful in them,
 "varies according to the different *Taste* of
 "Nations and Ages^q." Thus capricious
 and uncertain, he tells us, are our Ideas of
 natural Beauty; and these he brings home
 to the Point of Morals. "In Morals there
 "is no greater Certainty: Plurality of

^p *Fable of the Bees*, p. 372.

^q P. 376.

"Wives

“ Wives is odious among *Christians*, and all
“ the Wit and Learning of a great Genius SECT.
IV.
“ in Defence of it, has been rejected with
“ Contempt. But Polygamy is not shock-
“ ing to a *Mahometan*. What Men have
“ learnt from their Infancy enslaves them,
“ and the Force of Custom warps Nature,
“ and at the same Time imitates her in such
“ a Manner, that it is often difficult to
“ know, which of them we are influenced
“ by. In the East formerly, Sisters mar-
“ ried Brothers, and it was meritorious for
“ a Man to marry his Mother. Such Al-
“ liances are abominable: But it is certain,
“ that whatever Horror we conceive at the
“ Thoughts of them, there is nothing in
“ Nature repugnant against them, but what
“ is built upon Mode and Custom. A re-
“ ligious *Mahometan* may receive as great an
“ Aversion against Wine^r.” Hence, with
great Stretch of Reasoning he concludes,
“ that Virtue and Vice are not permanent
“ Realities,” but vary as other Fashions,
and are subject to no other Law, than that
of *Fancy* and *Opinion*.

AND so far indeed, this Gentleman seems
to have argued justly, while he contends

^r *Fable of the Bees*, p. 377, 379.

that

SECT. that mere *Approbation* and *Dislike*, the mere
 IV. Idea of *Beauty* and *Deformity*, *Truth* or
Rectitude, without Reference to some further *End*, can never constitute a real or permanent Foundation of *Vice* or *Virtue*. For, as he hath observed, there *have* indeed been considerable Differences of Opinion upon *some Kinds* of moral *Beauty* and *Deformity*, in the different Nations and Ages of the World: And each Age and Nation hath ever been alike positive in asserting the Propriety of its own. Therefore, unless we have some further Test, some other distinguishing and characteristic Circumstance to refer to, besides that of mere *Approbation* and *Dislike*, how shall we ever know, which of these *anomalous* Opinions are *right* or *wrong*? If we have nothing further to appeal to, than the mere Propriety of *Taste*, though each may be thoroughly satisfied of the Justness of his own; yet he ought in Reason to allow the same Right of Choice to the rest of Mankind in every Age and Nation: And thus indeed, *moral Beauty* and *Deformity*, *Virtue* and *Vice*, could have no other Law, than that of *Fancy* and *Opinion*.

BUT when the great End of public Happiness is ultimately referred to, as the *one*,
uniform

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 141

uniform Circumstance that constitutes the SECT.
IV.
Rectitude of human Actions; then indeed,
Virtue and *Vice* assume a more *real* and *per-*
manent Nature: The common *Sense*, nay,
the very *Necessities* of Mankind, will urge
them to make an unvaried and just *Dis-*
tinction: For *Happiness* and *Misery* make
too strong an Appeal to all the Faculties of
Man, to be borne down by the *Caprice* of
Fancy and Opinion. That it was either an
accidental or a designed Inattention to this
great Principle of *Happiness*, that gave this
coarse Writer an Occasion to call in Question
the permanent *Reality* of Vice and Virtue,
the following Considerations may sufficiently
convince us.

SHOULD any one ask, whether *Health* and
Sickness are two different Things, no Doubt
we should answer in the Affirmative: And
would surely suspect any Man's Sincerity,
who should tell us, that what was accounted
Health in one Age or Nation, was ac-
counted Sickness in another. There are
likewise such Things as wholesome Food
and Poisons: Nor would we entertain a
much better Opinion of him who should
affirm, that *all* depends upon *Fancy*; that
Bread or *Milk* are nourishing or destructive,
that

SECT. that *Arsenic* and *Sublimate* are wholesome
 IV. or poisonous, as *Imagination* and *Opinion*
 dictate. On the contrary we know, their
 Nature with Respect to Man, is *invariable*:
 The one, universally wholesome, the other,
 poisonous. Further: we know there have
 been Debates among Physicians, about *Re-*
gimen and *Diet*: That some have main-
 tained the Wholesomeness of *Animal*, others
 of *vegetable* Food: Some recommended the
 Drinking of *Water*, others of *Wine*. Yet
 none was ever so weak as to conclude from
 these different Opinions about wholesome
Diet, that the nourishing Qualities of *Bread*,
 or the noxious ones of *Arsenic*, were not
permanent Realities with regard to Man;
 or, that the first could be made *poisonous*,
 the latter, *wholesome*, by Dint of *Fancy* and
Opinion.

Now, the Case we are debating is exact-
 ly parallel. For sure, the *Happiness* and
Misery of Mankind are Things as distinct as
Health and *Sickness*: Whence it follows,
 that certain Actions, under the same Cir-
 cumstances, must universally produce Hap-
 piness or Misery, as naturally as Food pro-
 duceth Health, or Poison, Sickness, and
 Death. We have already seen, that what-
 ever

ever tends to the Good of all, is by the consent of all, denominated *Virtue*; that whatever is contrary to this great End, is universally branded as *Vice*; in the same Manner, as whatever nourishes the Body is called *Food*; whatever destroys it, *Poison*. Accordingly, we find the Agreement among Mankind as uniform on the one Subject, as on the other. All Ages and Nations having without Exception or Variance maintained, that Humanity, Fidelity, Truth, Temperance, and mutual Benevolence, do as naturally produce Happiness, as Food gives Health to the Body: That Cruelty, Treachery, Lying, Intemperance, Inhumanity, Adultery, Murder, do as naturally give Rise to Misery, as Poison brings on Sickness and Death.

BUT hath not this Author given such Instances as prove, that what is detested as *Vice* in one Country, is applauded as *Virtue* in another? That *Polygamy* and *incestuous Marriages* have been in some Nations reputed *lawful*, in others *meritorious*? And if one Virtue or Vice be imaginary or *variable*, doth it not clearly follow that *all* are so?

Now a Man of a common Turn of Thought would be apt to make a very different

144 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. ferent Inference. If from the *Variety* of
IV. Opinions among Mankind as to *some* Vir-
tues or Vices, he concluded *these* were *va-*
riable; then from the universal *Agreement*
of Mankind with regard to *other* Virtues
and Vices, he would conclude *these* were
fixed and *invariable*. The *Consent* of Man-
kind in the *one*, proves as much as their
Disagreement in the *other*. And 'tis evident
that both their Consent and Disagreement
arise from the same Principle: A Principle
which destroys the Tenets, which this Au-
thor labours to establish. For, to resume
our Illustration, as the various Opinions
concerning the superior Wholesomeness of
this or that kind of *Diet*, does not change
the Nature of *Bread* or *Poison*; so neither
can the various Opinions concerning *Poly-*
gamy or *Incest*, affect or change the Nature
of *Benevolence* and *Generosity*, *Adultery* and
Murder. 'Tis plain, these various Opinions
have been formed "upon such Actions only,
"as are not universally and clearly con-
"nected with the Happiness or Misery of
"Mankind." As these Actions have been
deemed productive of the *one* or the *other*,
they have been regarded as *Virtues* or
Vices: But this Variety of Opinions does no

more unsettle the Nature of those Actions, SECT. IV. whose *Tendency* is clear and *certain*; than the Debates on the superior Wholesomeness of animal or vegetable *Diet* can change the Nature of *Bread* and *Poison*. Hence it appears, that Virtue and Vice are permanent Realities, and that their Nature is fixed, certain, and *invariable*.

THUS one Extreme produceth another. For the noble Writer and this Gentleman, through a strong Dislike of each other's Systems, have *both* endeavoured to prove *too much*, and in Consequence have proved *nothing*. The one, contending for the permanent *Reality* of Virtue, and, not content to fix it on its proper Basis, attempts to establish certain *absolute* and *immutable* Forms of Beauty, without Regard to any *further End*; and thus, by laying a chimerical Foundation, *betrays* the Cause which he so generously defends. The other, intent on destroying the permanent Reality of Virtue and Vice, and perceiving how weak a Basis the noble Writer had laid for their Establishment, after proving *this* to be imaginary, as wisely as honestly infers, there is no real one in Nature. We now see the Folly of these Extremes: That as on the

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one

146 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. one Part, *Virtue* and *Vice* are Things merely
IV. *relative* to the *Happiness* of Man; so on the
other, while Man continues what he is, all
those *Relations* which concern his *Happi-
ness*, and arise from his present Manner of
Existence, are likewise *permanent* and *im-
mutable*.

SECTION V.

SECT. BUT this idle Objection against the per-
V. manent *Reality* of *Virtue* and *Vice*, is not
the only one which the Writer last men-
tioned hath laboured, for the Destruction of
Religion and *Virtue*. For the main Drift
and Intention of his Book is to prove no less
a Paradox than this, that “private Vices are
“public Benefits.” Now, till this Ob-
jection be removed, our Idea and Definition
of *Virtue* can never be thoroughly esta-
blished. For if *private Vices* be *public Be-
nefits*, then private *Virtues* are public *Mis-
chiefs*. And if so, what becomes of our
Definition?

Now, the first notable Circumstance in
this formidable Assertion of Dr. MANDE-
VILLE, is its utter Inconsistency with all that
he hath advanced in order to destroy the
Reality of *Vice* and *Virtue*. For if indeed
these

these be mere *Names*, the Creatures of SECT. V.
Fancy and Opinion, how can they be at-
tended with any *uniform* Effects? How can
they be either public *Benefits*, or public
Evils?---If on the contrary, they really
produce certain uniform Effects, as he hath
attempted to prove, how can they be mere
Non-Entities, the Creatures of Fancy and
Opinion? Here lies a gross and palpable
Incoherence: Take which of his two
Theories you please, the other absolutely
destroys it. If Vice be a public *Benefit*, it
must be a permanent *Reality*: If it is not a
permanent *Reality*, it cannot be a public
Benefit.

LET us now examine the Foundations
on which he hath built this strange Hypo-
thesis. His Book may be analysed into four
different Principles, which he hath variously
combined, or rather jumbled together, ac-
cording as each in their Turn would best
serve his Purpose.

THE first Principle he lays down, or ra-
ther takes up, *i. e.* for granted, is, "that
"Man is a compound of evil Passions:" In
other Words, "that the Gratification of the
"natural Appetites is in itself a Vice."
There are in his Book, at least a hundred

148 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. V. Pages of the lowest common-place Declamation, all founded on this one Principle, brought from the *solitary Caves* and *Visions* of the *Desart*. Thus the Desire of being esteemed by others, he stigmatizes with the Name of *Pride*: The natural Desire of social Converse between the two Sexes, he distinguisheth by a *grosser* Appellation. In a word, through the whole Course of his Argument, he *supposes* that every *selfish* Appetite (that is, every Appetite which hath regard to *ourself*) is in its own Nature vile and abominable. This the candid Reader will probably think a little hard upon human Nature: That no Man can be *virtuous*, while he endeavours to be *esteemed*, while he loves to quench his Thirst, minister to Posterity, or eat his Dinner. On the Weight of these plain Instances, the Value of this first Principle may be safely left to any Man's impartial Trial.

HAVING thus branded every Gratification of the natural Appetites; he gains from hence a proper Foundation for the second *Pillar* of this *Temple* of Vice. For he acquaints us with great Solemnity, that, of all other Vices, that of *Luxury* is most beneficial to a State: And that if this were banished

banished the Nation, all Kinds of manual SECT. V.
Occupations would immediately languish
and decay^s. He says indeed, that *Pedants*
make Objections to this Vice of Luxury,
and tell you, that it *enervates* a People: But
he adds, that “since he has seen the World,
“the Consequences of Luxury to a Nation,
“seem not so dreadful to him as they did.”
Had he left the Matter here, we should
have been at a Loss to know how he would
have made out this strange Tale: But the
Riddle is cleared up at once, when we hear
him say, that “every thing is Luxury, that
“is not immediately necessary to make Man
“subsist as he is a living Creature.”

WE should have been startled perhaps
had he assured us, that he had a *Wind-mill*
which laid *Eggs*, and bred *young* ones: But
how easily had he reconciled us to his Ve-
racity by only saying, that by a *Wind-mill*
he meant a *Goose*, or a *Turkey*?

THUS, when he affirms that Luxury pro-
duceth public Happiness, we stand ready
for some deep and subtile Speculation, to
support so wondrous a Paradox. But when
he poorly tells us, “that every thing is

^s *Fable of the Bees*, passim.

^t *Ibid.* p. 247.

^v *Ibid.* p. 108.

150 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. "Luxury that is not immediately necessary
V. "to make Man subsist as he is a living
"Creature;" we laugh not so much at his
Impudence, as at our own Folly in giving
Ear to so idle a Prater, whose wide-mouthed
Paradoxes so soon dwindle into a little
harmless Nonsense; and when we thought
we had him reforming States, and new-
modeling Philosophy, he was all the while
playing at *Crambo*.

LEST it should be suspected, that the
Features of this Man's Folly are here ag-
gravated, take a Copy of his Countenance
in one Instance out of many that might be
given. "The Consequences, saith he, of
"this Vice of Luxury to a Nation, seem
"not so dreadful to me as they did"---For
"clean Linen weakens a Man no more
"than Flannel^w." Now from these Pas-
sages laid together, it appears; first, that
Luxury is a Vice; secondly, that to wear
clean Linen is Luxury; and, therefore, it
comes out as clear as the Day, "that to
"wear clean Linen is a Vice."

SERIOUSLY; the Sophistry here em-
ployed, is one of those Insults that can be
safely offered only to an *English* Under-

^w *Fable of the Bees*, p. 119.

standing;

standing; which though none of the SECT.
V. brightest is always ready to reflect the present Object. Did ever any Man before --- except only a Set of wrong-headed Enthusiasts, whose Visions he is here obliged to adopt---did ever any Man maintain, that to use the Bounties of Nature, or enjoy the Conveniences of Life was a criminal Indulgence? Did ever any Man maintain, that *he* could be *viciously* luxurious, who neither *hurt* his *Neighbour* nor *himself*? At this Rate, by an arbitrary Use of Words, and putting one Expression for another, we might boldly advance the most palpable Contradictions, and maintain, that Dr. M---D---LE was a Man of Modesty and Virtue.

THUS far we have seen this Writer endeavouring to throw the *false* Colours of *Vice* upon the *natural Passions*, and such a Use of the Gifts of Nature as is really *Innocent*. In examining his two remaining Principles, we shall find him acting a Part the very *reverse*; and with the same Effrontery, endeavouring to throw the *false* Colours of *public Utility* on such *Actions* and *Affections* as are really *criminal* and *destructive*.

SECT.
V.

To this Purpose he boldly selects some of the most flagrant Crimes; and assures us, that without their happy Influence the Public would suffer exceedingly. Who had ever dreamt, that Mankind receives Benefit from *Thieves* and *House-breakers*? Yet he tells us, that “if all People were strictly “honest, half the Smiths in the Nation “would want Employment^x.”

HIGHWAYMEN too, and *Robbers* are useful in their Generation. For “if a Miser “should be robbed of Five hundred or a “thousand Guineas^y, it is certain, that as “soon as this Money should come to circulate, the Nation would be the better for “the Robbery, and receive the same and as “real a Benefit from it, as if an Archbishop “had left the same Sum to the Public^z.”

^x *Fable of the Bees*, p. 82.

^y There is a common Error with regard to *Misers*, on which this pretended Argument is built. They are generally accounted the greatest Enemies of *Society*, because they *hoard* the *Wealth* which ought to *circulate*. Now, to give even a *Miser* his due, this is really a groundless Charge: For they seldom *hoard* more than certain useless Papers or Parchments, in the Shape of *Notes*, *Bonds*, and *Mortgages*: While the Wealth which they thus *hoard* in *Imagination*, circulates *freely* among all Ranks of People. The Guilt of the Miser's Passion lies in its being essentially destructive both of Justice and Benevolence.

^z *Fable of the Bees*, p. 83.

HE is abundantly rhetorical on "the large SECT. V.
 " Catalogue of solid Blessings that accrue
 " from, and are owing to intoxicating
 " Gin^a." Infomuch, that if the Drunken-
 ness and Frenzy arising from the excessive
 Use of this salutary Liquor were curbed by
 the Magistrate, he seems to foretel the most
 fatal Consequences to the public Wealth
 and Welfare.

HERE then he enumerates several real
 Crimes, which are *necessarily* attended with
great Evils; and these he demonstrates, are
accidentally productive of *some Good*. And
 this indeed is the only Part of his Argu-
 ment, that is attended with any Degree of
 Plausibility: For here, it must be owned,
 there is Room for a dishonest Mind to *con-*
found, though by no Means to *convince* an
 impartial Reader. Because the Conse-
 quences of these Crimes being of a various
 and *discordant* Nature, some having the Ap-
 pearance of *Good*, and others of *Ill* to So-
 ciety; a *rhetorical* Display of the *former*
 may possibly induce a superficial Enquirer,
 who is caught by a Glare of Eloquence, to
 doubt whether *these* do not really *predomi-*
nate. But a moderate Share of Attention

^a *Fable of the Bees*, p. 89.

will

SECT. will convince us, that this is impossible.
V.
Because all the real Vices he mentions, though they be accidentally productive of some Good; yet 'tis such as might effectually be obtained without them. Thus the Money taken wrongfully by Stealth or Robbery, is only of Service to the Public by its Circulation: But Money may circulate without Stealth or Robbery; and therefore 'tis neither the Stealth nor Robbery that is of Service to the Public. On the other part, there are great and substantial Evils, which these Crimes, and these alone give Rise to. On this Occasion one might be very large on the Terrors and Distress, the Murders, and consequent Miseries, which the Villanies patronized by this Writer do necessarily produce. One who was Master of Dr. MANDEVILLE'S *Town-Rhetoric and Town-Experience*, might draw a striking Picture of honest and industrious Families rowzed from Sleep at Midnight, only to be plundered and destroyed; of the horrid Attempts of abandoned Wickedness, let loose from Fear by the Security of Darknes; the Shrieks of ravished Maids and Matrons; the dying Groans of Brothers, Fathers, Husbands, weltring in their Blood; the
Cries

Cries of innocent and helpless Orphans SECT.
weeping over their murdered Parents, de- V.
prived at once of all that were dear to them,
of all that could yield them Consolation or
Support; and suffering every vile Indignity,
that unrelenting Villainy can suggest or per-
petrate. And how, think you, does this
Scene of domestic Horror change its ori-
ginal Nature, and rise at length into a pub-
lic Blessing? Why, because the Adven-
turers, having made off with their Booty,
may possibly "lay it out upon a *Harlot*, or
"squander it in a *Night-cellar*, or a *Gin-*
"shop^b:" And thus the Money circulates
through the Nation. But, in the mean
Time, our Philosopher hath forgot the help-
less Family reduced to Beggary by the Prow-
ess of his *nocturnal Heroes*: He hath for-
got that the fond and indulgent Parent might
no less probably have laid out the Money in
the temperate Maintenance and liberal Edu-
cation of his Children, which is now squan-
dered in unprofitable *Riot* and *Excess*: That
these Destroyers of other Men's Happiness
and their own, had they been employed in
honest Labour, in the Cultivation of *Lands*,
or the Improvement of *Manufactures*, might

^b *Fable of the Bees*, p. 84, 85.

have

156 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. V. have done substantial Services to the Public and themselves, without the guilty *Alloy* of unprovoked Mischief. From these Circumstances impartially compared, 'tis evident, that the only essential Consequence of private Vice, is public Misery: And thus our Author's new fashioned System of Morals falls back again into nothing.

HIS fourth Principle is much less plausible. Indeed he never applies to this, but when reduced to the last Necessity: When therefore every other Foundation fails him, he attempts to impose upon his Reader's Negligence or Simplicity, by representing Vice as a *Cause*, where in Reality 'tis a *Consequence*. Thus he tells us, "Great Wealth
" and foreign Treasure will ever scorn to
" come among Men, unless you'll admit
" their *inseparable Companions*, Avarice and
" Luxury: Where Trade is considerable,
" Fraud will *intrude*. To be at *once well-*
" *bred and sincere*, is no less than a Contra-
" diction: And therefore whilst Man ad-
" vances in Knowledge, and his Manners
" are polished, we must expect to see at the
" same Time his Desires enlarged, his Ap-
" petites refined, and his *Vices increased*."

^c *Fable of the Bees*, p. 201.

So

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 157

So again, having been driven from his other SECT. V.
strong Holds by certain impertinent Re-
markers, whom he wisely dismisseth with
an Air of Superiority and Contempt, he
takes Refuge in the same ambiguous Phrases:
As that "Vice is *inseparable* from great and
" potent Societies, in the same Manner as
" *dirty Streets* are a necessary Evil, *inse-*
" *parable* from the *Felicity* of London^d."

Now, though this happy *Simile* may
work Wonders in a *Coffee-House*, amongst
those who see every *dirty Alley* pregnant
with Demonstration; yet, 'tis to be hoped,
more serious Readers may distinguish bet-
ter. And be enabled to tell him, that be-
fore they grant his Position, *that private*
Vice is public Benefit, they expect he should
prove, "that the Dirt in *London Streets*, is
" the Cause or Instrument whereby *London*
" becomes a populous and flourishing City:"
A Proposition almost as remote from com-
mon Apprehension, as that *Tenterden Steeple*
is the Cause of *Goodwin Sands*. Thus, we
see how dextrously he puts the Change upon
the unwary Reader; and while he pretends
to exhibit an *essential Cause*, flurs him off
with an *accidental Consequence*.

^d *Fable of the Bees*, Preface, p. 9, &c.

158 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. INTO these four Principles, all evidently
V. *False* or *Foreign* to the Purpose, his whole Book may be justly analysed. Nor is there one Observation in the Compass of so many hundred Pages, which tends to support the pernicious Falsehood that disgraceth his *Title-Page*, but what will naturally resolve itself into one or other of these wretched *Sophisms*. 'Tis therefore unnecessary to lead the Reader through all the *Windings* of this immense *Labyrinth* of Falsehood, 'tis enough, to have given the *Clue* which may safely conduct him through them.

S E C T I O N VI.

SECT. HAVING at Length gained an Ade-
VI. quate Idea of Virtue, and found that it is no other than "the voluntary Production of " the greatest public Happiness;" we may now safely proceed to consider, " upon " what Foundations Mankind are *obliged* to " the Practice of it?"

AND here we shall find another metaphysical *Cloud* resting upon *this* Path, in itself plain and easy to all Mankind. For the very Notion of *Obligation* to Virtue hath been as much confounded by moral Writers,

ters, as the Idea of *Virtue* itself. And here SECT. VI.
we might travel through another System of *Logomachies*; while one asserts, that we are obliged to *love* and *pursue* *Virtue*, because *she* is *beautiful*; another, because *Virtue* is *good*; another, because *Virtue* is *good in itself*; a fourth, because *Virtue* is *Truth*; a fifth, because it is *agreeable to Nature*; a sixth, because it is agreeable to the *Relations of Things*.

BUT 'tis supposed that the intelligent Reader, from a review of the first Section of this Essay, may be convinced, that all these *amusing* Expressions amount to no more than this, "that there is some Reason or other why we ought to practise *Virtue*; but that the particular Reason doth not appear, notwithstanding all this refined Pomp of Affirmation." And as it hath already been made evident, that the *Essence* of *Virtue* consists in a Conformity of our Affections and Actions, with the greatest *public Happiness*; so it will now appear, "that "the only *Reason* or *Motive*, by "which Individuals can possibly be *induced* "or *obliged* to the Practice of *Virtue*, must "be the *Feeling* immediate, or the *Prospect* "of future *private Happiness*."

DOUBT-

SECT.
VI.

DOUBTLESS, the noble Writer's Admirers will despise and reject this, as an unworthy Maxim. For so it hath happened, that in the Height of their Zeal, for supporting his Opinions, they generally stigmatize *private Happiness*, as a Thing scarce worth a wise Man's enquiring after. Indeed, the many ambiguous Phrases of their Master have contributed not a little to this *vulgar Error*. For in one Place, he brands the modern Philosophers and Divines with the Name of Sophisters and Pedants, for "rating Life "by the Number and Exquifiteness of the "pleasing Sensations^e." At other Times he speaks of *Pleasure*, with all the Contempt of an antient *Stoic*^f. In the same high Style of the *Athenian Porch*, he passeth Judgment on the Hopes of the Religious: "They have made Virtue so mercenary a Thing, and have talked so much "of its *Rewards*, that one can hardly tell "what there is in it, after all, which can "be *worth* rewarding^g." So again, he derides those "modern Projectors, who would "new frame the human Heart; and have "a mighty Fancy to reduce all its Motions,

^e *Wit and Hum.* Part iii. § 4.
§ 3. ^g *Wit*, Part ii. § 3.

^f *Moral.* Part iii.

"Balances,

“ Balances, and Weights to that one Prin-
 “ ciple and Foundation of a cool and deli-
 “ berate *Selfishness*: And thus, Love of
 “ one’s Country, and Love of Mankind,
 “ must also be *Self-love*^h.”

SECT.
VI.

Now ere we proceed further, it may be necessary to remark, that in some Degree there hath been a *Strife about Words* in this particular too. For these Expressions of *Selfishness* and *Disinterestedness* have been used in a very *loose* and *indeterminate* Manner. In one Sense a *Motive* is called *disinterested*; when it consists in a pure *benevolent* Affection, or a Regard to the *moral Sense*. In another, no Motive is *disinterested*: For even in acting according to these Impulses of Benevolence and Conscience, we gratify an Inclination, and act upon the Principle or *immediate Feeling* of *private Happiness*. Thus when we say, “ We love Virtue for Virtue’s Sake ;” ’tis only implied, that we find immediate Happiness from the Love and Practice of Virtue, without Regard to external or future Consequences.

ANOTHER Source of mutual Misapprehension on this Subject hath been “ the In-

^h *Wit*, Part ii. § 3.

M

“ troduction

SECT. VI. "Introduction of *metaphorical* Expressions in-
 VI. "stead of *proper* ones." Nothing is so common among the Writers on Morality, as "the Harmony of Virtue"--- "the Proportion of Virtue." So the noble Writer frequently expresseth himself. But his favourite Term, borrowed indeed from the Antients, is "the BEAUTY of Virtue." --- *Quæ si videri posset, mirabiles excitaret amores*ⁱ--- Of this our Author and his Followers, especially the most ingenious of them^k, are so *enamoured*, that they seem utterly to have forgot they are *talking in Metaphor*, when they describe the Charms of this *sovereign Fair*. Infomuch, that an unexperienced Person, who should read their *Encomiums*, would naturally fall into the Mistake of him, who asked the Philosopher, "Whether the Virtues were not *living Creatures*^l?" Now this *figurative* Manner, so essentially interwoven into philosophical Disquisition, hath been the Occasion of great Error. It tends to mislead us both with regard to the Nature of Virtue, and our Obligations to the Practice of it. For first, it induceth a Persuasion, that Virtue is *excellent* without Regard to any of

ⁱ Cicero. ^k Mr. Hutcheson. ^l Senecæ Epist. cxiv.

its Consequences: And secondly, that he must either want Eyes, or common Discernment, who doth not at first Sight fall in Love with this *matchless Lady*.

SECT.
VI.

THEREFORE setting aside, as much as may be, all ambiguous Expressions, it seems evident, that “a Motive, from its very Nature, must be something that affects *ourselves*.” If any Man hath found out a Kind of Motive which doth not affect *himself*, he hath made a deeper Investigation into the “Springs, Weights, and Balances” of the human Heart, than I can pretend to. Now what can possibly affect *ourselves*, or determine us to Action, but either the Feeling or Prospect of *Pleasure* or *Pain*, *Happiness* or *Misery*?

BUT to come to the direct Proof: 'Tis evident, even to Demonstration, that no *Affection* can, in the strict Sense, be more or less *selfish* or *disinterested* than another; because, *whatever* be its *Object*, the *Affection* itself is *still* no other than a *Mode* either of *Pleasure* or of *Pain*; and is therefore *equally* to be referred to the *Mind* or *Feeling* of the *Patient*, whatever be its *external Occasion*. Indeed, a late Writer of Subtilty and Refinement hath attempted to

SECT.
VI.

make a Distinction here. He says, "It hath been observed, that every Act of Virtue or Friendship is attended with a secret *Pleasure*; from whence it hath been concluded, that Friendship and Virtue could not be disinterested. But the Fallacy of this is obvious. The virtuous Sentiment or Passion *produces* the Pleasure, and does not *arise* from it. I feel a Pleasure in doing good to my Friend, *because* I love him; but I do not love him for the Sake of that Pleasure^m." Now to me, the Fallacy of *this* is obvious. For in Fact, neither the *Passion*, nor the *Pleasure*, are either the *Cause* or the *Consequence* of each other; they neither *produce* nor *arise* from each other; because, in Reality, they are the *same Thing* under different *Expressions*. This will be clear, if we state the Case as follows: "To love my Friend, is to feel a Pleasure in doing him Good:" And conversely; "to feel a Pleasure in doing Good to my Friend, is to love him." Where 'tis plain that the *Terms* are *synonymous*. The *Pleasure* therefore is the very *Passion itself*; and neither *prior* nor *posterior* to it, as this Gentleman supposeth.

^m Hume's *Essays, Mor. and Polit.* p. 125.

AGAIN,

AGAIN, that the Pleasures arising from Benevolence, and the moral Sense, are strictly *Selfish*, in this Sense of the Word, like every other Enjoyment, seems evident from some parallel Concessions of the noble Writer. For these seemingly disinterested Pleasures he perpetually sets on a Level with the Perceptions of natural Beauty, Order, Harmony, and Proportion. These last are, by all, acknowledged to be of the selfish Kind; therefore the other are so too; being only a *higher Order of the same*, and expressly called so by the noble Writerⁿ.

THE Reasons why the great universal Principle of *private Happiness* hath not been so clearly seen in the *Benevolent*, as in the *Self-Passions*, seem to be these. First, Ambiguous Expressions, such as have been remarked above. 2dly, Perhaps some Degree of *Pride*, and Affectation of *Merit*; because *Merit* seems to appear in what is called *Disinterest*. 3dly, And perhaps principally, because in the Exercise of the benevolent Passions, the Happiness is essentially *concomitant* with the Passion itself, and therefore is not easily separated from it by the *Imagination*, so as to be considered

ⁿ *Moralists*, Part ii.

166 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. VI. as a *distinct End*. Whereas in the Passions called *Selfish*, the Happiness sought after is often *unattainable*, and therefore easily and necessarily distinguished by the Imagination as a *positive End*. This Circumstance of Union however, as is judiciously remarked by one of the noble Writer's Followers°, proves the great Superiority and Excellence of the benevolent Affections, considered as a Source of Happiness, beyond the Passions and Appetites, commonly called the *Selfish*.

BUT although these Observations be necessary, in order to clear up an Affair, which hath been much perplexed with philosophical, or *unphilosophical* Refinements; yet, on a closer Examination, it will appear, in the most direct Manner, from the noble Writer himself, that "there is no other Principle
" of human Action, but that of the *immediate* or *foreseen* Happiness of the Agent:" That all these amusing Speculations concerning the *Comely*, *Fit*, and *Decent*; all these *verbal* Separations between *Pleasure*, *Interest*, *Beauty*, and *Good*, might have been sunk in one *precise* and plain Disquisition, concerning such Actions and Affections as

° Three Treatises, by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On Happiness, p. 189.

yield a *lasting*, and such as afford only a *short* and transient *Happiness*. For thus, after all, his Lordship explains himself: SECT.
VI.
 “ That *Happiness* is to be pursued, and, in
 “ Fact, is always sought after; that the
 “ Question is not, who *loves himself*, and
 “ who *not*; but who *loves and serves himself*
 “ the *rightest*, and after the *truest* Manner.---
 “ That ’tis the Height of *Wisdom*, no doubt,
 “ to be *rightly Selfish*”---“ Even to leave
 “ Family, Friends, Country, and Society
 “ ---in good Earnest, *who would not*, if it
 “ were *Happiness* to do so^p?”

THESE Expressions are so strongly pointed, as to leave no further Doubt concerning the noble Writer’s Sentiments on this Subject. Indeed, they are the natural Dictates of common Sense, unsophisticated with false Philosophy. In every subsequent Debate therefore, wherein his Lordship’s Opinions are concerned, we may safely build on this as an acknowledged and sure Foundation, “ that the Motives or natural Obligations of Man to the Practice of Virtue, “ can only arise from a Sense of his *present*, “ or a Prospect of his *future Happiness*.”

^p *Wit and Hum.* Part iii. § 3.

SECTION VII.

S E C T. NOW this Conclusion will carry us to
VII. another Question of a very interesting and
 abstruse Nature: That is, "How far, and
 "upon what Foundation, the uniform
 "Practice of Virtue, is *really* and *clearly*
 "connected with the Happiness of every
 "Individual?" For so far, as we have seen,
 and no further, can every Individual be na-
 turally moved or obliged to the Practice of
 it.

THIS is evidently a Question of *Fact*:
 And as it relates to the *Happiness* of *Man*,
 can only be determined by appealing to his
Constitution. If *this* be indeed *uniform* and
invariable; that is, if every Individual hath
 the same Perceptions, Passions, and Desires;
 then indeed the Sources of Happiness must
 be *similar* and *unchangeable*. If, on the con-
 trary, different Men be differently consti-
 tuted; if they have *different* Perceptions,
 Passions, and Desires; then must the
 Sources of their Happiness be equally *va-*
rious.

IT should seem therefore, that "while
 "Moralists have been enquiring into hu-
 "man Happiness, they have generally con-
 "sidered

“sidered it, as arising from one *uniform* and SECT. VII.
“*particular* Source, instead of tracing it up
“to those various Fountains whence it really
“springs; which are indefinitely various,
“combined, and indeterminable.” And
this seems to have been the most general
Foundation of Error.

IF we speak with Precision, there are but
three Sources in Man, of Pleasure and Pain,
Happiness and Misery: These are *Sense*,
Imagination, and the *Passions*. Now the
slightest Observation will convince us, that
these are associated, separated and combined
in Man, with a Variety almost infinite. In
some, the Pleasures and Pains of *Sense* pre-
dominate; Imagination is dull; the Passions
inactive. In others, a more delicate Frame
awakens all the Powers of Imagination;
the Passions are refined; the Senses dis-
regarded. A third Constitution is carried
away by the Strength of Passion: The Calls
of Sense are contemned; and Imagination
becomes no more than the necessary Instru-
ment of some further Gratification.

From overlooking this plain Fact, seems
to have arisen the Discordance among Phi-
losophers concerning the Happiness of Man.
And while *each* hath attempted to exhibit
one

SECT. VII. one favourite Picture, as the *Paragon* or *Standard* of human Kind; they have *all* omitted some Ten thousand other Resemblances which actually subsist in Nature.

THUS, most of the *Epicurean* Sect, tho' not the Founder of it, have discarded *Benevolence* and *Virtue* from their System of *private* Happiness. The modern Patronizers of this Scheme, Mr. HOBBS, Dr. MANDEVILLE, and several *French* Writers, after heaping up a Collection of sordid Instances, which prove the *sensual* Inclinations and *Selfishness* of Man, leap at once to their desired Conclusion, that the pretended public Affections are therefore no more than the same low Passions in Disguise. That *Benevolence* makes no Part of Man's Nature; that the human Kind are absolutely unconnected with each other in Point of Affection: And that every Individual *seeks* and *finds* his *private* Happiness in and *from himself alone*.

THE noble Writer, on the contrary, viewing the brighter Parts of human Nature, through the amiable Medium of the *Socratic* Philosophy; and fixing his Attention on the *public Affections*, as the Instruments both of public and private Happiness;

ness; rejects the *Epicurean's* Pretences with Disdain: And fully conscious of the high Claims and Energy of Virtue, affirms that the *private Affections* are, by no means, a Foundation for *private Happiness*: That, on the contrary, we must universally promote the Welfare of others, if we would effectually secure our own: And that in every Case, "*Virtue is the Good, and Vice the Ill of every one*."

SECT.
VII.

'Tis plain, no two Systems of Philosophy can be more *discordant* than these; yet each of them have obtained a Number of Partizans in all Ages of the World. The Question relates to a *Fact*, and the Fact lies open to the *personal Examination* of all Mankind. Whence then can so strange an Opposition of Sentiments arise?

THIS seems to have arisen, not from a *false*, but a *partial* View and Examination of the Subject. The *Stoic* Party dwell altogether on the *social* or *public*, the *Epicurean* no less on the *private* or *selfish* Affections: On these respectively they declaim; so that according to the one, Mankind are naturally a Race of *Demi-Gods*; according to the other, a Crew of *Devils*. Both forgetting,

^a Enquiry concerning Virtue, passim.

what

SECT. VII. what is unquestionably the Truth, that these *social* and *private* Affections are blended in an endless Variety of Degrees, and thus form an infinite Variety of Inclinations and of Characters. Many of the particular Facts, therefore, which these two Sects alledge, are true: But the *general* Consequence they draw from these *particular* Facts, is groundless and imaginary. Thus, 'tis true, that Mankind reap high Enjoyments from the Senses, Imagination, and Passions, without any regard to the public Affections: But the Consequence which the *Epicurean* would draw from hence, that “therefore the public Affections are never, “in any Case, a Source of private Happiness;” this is entirely void of Evidence: It supposeth Mankind to be *one uniform* Subject, while it is a Subject infinitely *various*; that every Individual has the same Feelings, Appetites, Fancies, and Affections, while, in Fact, they are mixed and combined in an endless Variety of Degrees. So, on the contrary, it must appear to every impartial Observer, that “the Exercise of the “public Affections is a Source of the highest “Gratification to many Individuals.” But the *Stoic's* Conclusion, that “therefore the “uniform

“ uniform Exercise of the public Affections, SECT.
VII.
“ in Preference to every other, is the only

“ Source of Happiness to every Individual;”
this is a Conclusion equally void of Evidence. For, like its opposite Extreme, it supposeth Mankind to be one uniform Subject, while, in Fact, it is a Subject indefinitely various. It supposes that every Individual has the same Feelings, Appetites, Fancies, and Affections, while, in Reality, they are mixed and combined in an endless Variety of Degrees.

LET us now assign the most probable Foundation, on which these *narrow* and *partial* Systems have been so commonly embraced. For, that two Theories so opposite, and so devoid of all rational Support, should have made their Way in the World, without some *permanent* Cause beyond the Instability of mere *Chance*, seems hardly credible.

It should seem therefore, that “ while
“ the Patronizers of these two Systems have
“ attempted to give a general Picture of the
“ human Species, they have all along taken
“ the Copy from themselves: And thus
“ their Philosophy, instead of being a true
“ History of Nature, is no more than the
“ History

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174 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. VII. "History of their own *Imaginations* or *Affections*."---This Truth may receive sufficient Confirmation from the Lives and Conduct of all the old Philosophers, from the *elegant* PLATO walking on his rich *Carpets*, to the *unbred* CYNIC snarling in his *Tub*. As every Man's *Constitution* led him, so he adopted this or that Sect of *Philosophy*, and reasoned concerning *Fitness*, *Decency*, and *Good*. Read the Characters of CATO and CESAR, and you will clearly discover the true Foundation on which the one became a rigid *Stoic*, the other, a gross *Epicurean*. The first, yet a *Boy*, discovered such an *inflexible* Adherence to the Privileges of his Country, that he refused his Assent to what he thought a Violation of them, though threatened with immediate Death^r. The *latter*, yet unpractised in the Subtilties of Philosophy, and under the sole Dominion of natural Temper, discovered, at his first Appearance in the World, such Traits of *Art*, *Spirit*, and *Ambition*, that SYLLA declared, he saw something more formidable than MARIUS rising in him^s. To bring down the Observation to modern Times; 'tis evident, that the Patronizers

^r Plutarchi *Cato Utic.*

^s Suetonii *Julius Cesar.*

of

of these two Systems inlist themselves according to the secret Suggestions of their several Passions. 'Tis well known, that the Writer of the *Fable of the Bees* was neither a *Saint* in his Life, nor a *Hermit* in his Diet: He seems to have been Master of a very considerable *Sagacity*, much Knowledge of the World, as it appears in populous *Cities*, extremely sensible to all the grosser *bodily* Enjoyments; but for *Delicacy* of Sentiment, Imagination, or Passion, for an exquisite *Taste* either in *Arts* or *Morals*, he appears to have been *incapable* of it.--- The noble Writer is known to have been of a Frame the very Reverse of this: His *Constitution* was neither more nor less opposite to Dr. MANDEVILLE's, than his Philosophy. His sensual Appetites were weak; his Imagination all alive, noble, and capacious; his Passions were accordingly refined, and his public Affections (in *Fancy* at least) predominant. To these Instances, a moderate Share of Sagacity and Knowledge of the World may add others innumerable, in observing the Temper and Conduct of the Followers of these two Systems; who always take Party according to the Biass of their own Constitution. Among the *Epi-*
cureans

176 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. VII. *cureans* we ever find Men of high Health, florid Complexions, firm Nerves, and a Capacity for Pleasure: Of the *Stoic* Party are the delicate or sickly Frames, Men incapable of the groffer sensual Enjoyments, and who either *are*, or *think* themselves *virtuous*. Now from these accumulated Proofs we may be convinced, that “they who give
“us these *uniform* Pictures of a Subject so
“*various* as *Mankind*, cannot have drawn
“them from *Nature*: That, on the contrary, they have copied them from their
“own *Hearts* or *Imaginations*; and fondly
“erected *themselves* into a general Standard
“of the *human Species*.”

BUT although these Observations may afford sufficient Proof, that the *Stoic* and *Epicurean* Pictures of Mankind are equally partial; yet still it remains to be enquired how far, upon the whole, the human Kind in Reality leans towards the *one* or the *other*: That is, “how far, and in what Degree,
“the uniform Practice of Virtue constitutes
“the Happiness of Individuals?” Now the only Method of determining this Question, will be to select some of the most striking *Features* of the human Heart: By this Means we may *approach* towards a real
Likeness,

Likeness, though from that infinite Variety SECT.
VII. which subsists in Nature, the *Draught* must ever be inadequate and *defective*.

To begin with the lowest Temperature of the human Species; “there are great Numbers of Mankind, in whom the Senses are the chief Sources of Pleasure and Pain.” To the Harmony of Sounds, the Beauty of Forms, the Decorum of Actions, they are utterly insensible. They are sagacious and learned in all the Grati-fications of Sense; but if you talk to them of the public Affections, of Generosity, Kindness, Friendship, Good-will, you talk in a Language they understand not. They seem, in a Manner, unconnected with the rest of their Kind; they view the Praises, Censures, Enjoyments and Sufferings of others, with an Eye of perfect Indifference. To Men thus formed, how can Virtue gain Admittance? Do you appeal to their *Taste* of Beauty? They have none. To their acknowledged Perceptions of *Right* and *Wrong*? These they Measure by their private *Interest*. To the Force of the public *Affections*? They never felt them. Thus every Avenue is foreclosed, by which *Virtue* should enter.

178 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT.
VII.

THE next remarkable Peculiarity is,
“where not the Senses, but *Imagination* is
“the predominant Source of Pleasure.”
Here the Taste always runs into the elegant
Refinements of polite Arts and Acquire-
ments; of Painting, Music, Architecture,
Poetry, Sculpture: Or, in Defect of this
truer Taste, on the false Delicacies of Dress,
Furniture, and Equipage. Yet Experience
tells us, that this Character is widely dif-
ferent from the virtuous one: That all the
Powers of Imagination may subsist in their
full Energy, while the *public Affections* and
moral Sense are weak or utterly inactive.
Nor can there be any necessary Connexion
between these different Feelings; because
we see Numbers immersed in all the finer
Pleasures of Imagination, who never once
consider them as the Means of *giving Plea-*
sure to others, but merely as a *selfish* Gratifi-
cation. This the noble Writer seems to have
been aware of; and, not without great Ad-
dress, endeavours to convert the Fact into a
Proof of his main Theory, though, in Rea-
lity, it affords the strongest Evidence against
him. “The *Venustum*, the *Honestum*, the
“*Decorum* of Things, will force its Way.
“They, who refuse to give it Scope in the
“nobler

“ nobler Subjects of a rational and moral SECT. VII.
 “ Kind, will find its Prevalency elsewhere,

 “ in an inferior Order of Things --- as either
 “ in the Study of common *Arts*, or in the
 “ Care and Culture of mere mechanic
 “ *Beauties*.---The *Specter* still will *haunt* us,
 “ in *some Shape or other*; and when driven
 “ from our cool Thoughts, and frightened
 “ from the *Closet*, will meet us even at
 “ Court, and fill our Heads with Dreams of
 “ Grandeur, Titles, Honours, and a false
 “ Magnificence and Beauty^t.” All this is
 ingenious and plausible: And the very ele-
 gant Allusion, of “ the Specter still haunt-
 “ ing us in some Shape or other,” seems at
 first View to imply, that even the most ob-
 stinate Endeavours to get rid of the Force
 of moral Beauty, are ineffectual and vain.
 But a nearer Examination will convince us,
 that the noble Writer applies here to *Elo-*
quence, rather than *Argument*; and puts us
 off with a *Metaphor* instead of a *Reason*.
 For the Pleasures of Imagination, whether
 they run in the Channel of polite Arts, Fur-
 niture, Planting, Building, or Equipage, are
 indeed no *Specters*, but independent *Real-*
ities fairly existing in the Mind: They have

^t *Wit and Hum.* Part iv. § 2.

SECT.
VII.

no immediate or necessary Connexion with the Happiness of Mankind, which is often and *designedly* violated in order to gain the Possession of them. 'Tis true, the Pleasures of Imagination and Virtue are often *united* in the same Mind; but 'tis equally true, that they are often *separate*; that they who are most sensible to the *one*, are entire Strangers to the *other*; that one Man, to *purchase* a fine *Picture*, will *oppress* his Tenant; that another, to *relieve* his distressed Tenant, will *sell* his Statues or his Pictures. The Reason is evident: The one draws his Pleasure from *Imagination*; the other from *Affection* only. 'Tis clear therefore, that "where *Imagination* is naturally the pre-dominant Source of Pleasure," the Motives to Virtue must be very *partial* and *weak*, since the chief Happiness ariseth from a Source entirely distinct from the *benevolent Affections*.

ANOTHER, and very different Tempera-
ture of the Heart of Man is that "wherein
"neither Sense nor Imagination, but the
"PASSIONS are the chief Sources of Plea-
"sure and Pain." This often forms the
best or the *worst* of Characters. As it runs
either, First, Into the Extreme of Selfish-
ness,

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 181

ness, Jealousy, Pride, Hatred, Envy, and Revenge; or, 2^{dly}, Into the amiable Affections of Hope, Faith, Candour, Pity, Generosity, and Good-will; or, 3^{dly}, Into a various Mixture or Combination of these; which is undoubtedly the most common Temperature of human Kind.

SECT.
VII.

Now to the first of these Tempers, how can we affirm with Truth, that there is a natural Motive or Obligation to Virtue? On the contrary, it should seem, that, if there be any Motive, it must be to *Vice*. For 'tis plain, that from the Losses, Disappointments, and Miseries of Mankind, such vile Tempers draw their chief Felicity. The noble Writer indeed, in his Zeal for Virtue, considers these black Passions as *unnatural*, and brands them as a Source of *constant Misery*^v. And sure it would be matter of Joy to all good Men, to find his Proofs convincing. But if indeed this be not a true Representation of the Case, I see not what Service can be done to the Interests of *Virtue*, by *disguising* Truth. 'Tis not the Part of a Philosopher to write *Panegyrics*, but to *investigate* the real State of human Nature; and the only Way of doing

^v Enquiry.

SECT. VII. this to any good Purpose, is to do it *impartially*: For with regard to human Nature, as well as Individuals, "Flattery is a Crime
"no less than Slander."

WHEN therefore the noble Writer calls these Affections *unnatural*, he doth not sufficiently explain himself. If indeed by their being unnatural, he means, that "they are
"such in their Degrees or Objects as to
"violate the public Happiness, which is the
"main Intention of Nature;" in this Sense, 'tis acknowledged, they are *unnatural*. But this Interpretation is foreign to the Question; because it affects not the *Individual*. But if, by their being *unnatural*, he would imply, that they are "a Source of constant
"Misery to the Agent;" this seems a Proposition not easy to be determined in the Affirmative.

FOR the main Proof which he brings in Support of this Assertion is, "that the
"Men of *gentlest Dispositions*, and *best of*
"Tempers, have at some time or other been
"sufficiently acquainted with those Disturbances, which, at ill Hours, even small
"Occasions are apt to raise. From these
"slender Experiences of Harshness and ill
"Humour, they fully know and will confess

“ feels the ill Moments which are passed, SECT.
 “ when the Temper is ever so little galled VII.
 “ and fretted. How must it fare therefore
 “ with those, who hardly know any better
 “ Hours in Life; and who, for the greatest
 “ Part of it, are agitated by a thorow *active*
 “ *Spleen*, a close and settled Malignity and
 “ Rancour^w ?”

Now, this Instance is by no means sufficient to support the Affirmation. For 'tis plain, that in the Case of the “ Men of
 “ gentlest Dispositions, and best of Tempers,
 “ occasionally agitated by ill Humour,”
 there must be a strong Opposition and Discordance, a violent Conflict between the habitual Affections of Benevolence, and these accidental Eruptions of Spleen and Rancour which rise to obstruct their Course. A Warfare of this Kind must indeed be a State of complete Misery, when all is Uproar within, and the distracted Heart set at Variance with itself. But the Case is widely different, where “ a thorow active Spleen
 “ prevails, a close and *settled* Malignity and
 “ Rancour.” For in this Temper, there is no parallel Opposition of contending Passions: Nor therefore any similar Founda-

^w *Enquiry*, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

184 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT.
VII.

tion for inward Disquiet and intense Misery. So much the noble Writer himself is obliged to own elsewhere. “ Is there that sordid
“ Creature on Earth, who does not prize
“ his own Enjoyment?---Is not *Malice* and
“ *Cruelty* of the *highest Relish* with some
“ Natures*?” Again, and still more fully
to the Purpose: “ Had we Sense, we should
“ consider, ’tis in Reality the *thorough* Profli-
“ gate, the very *complete unnatural Villain*
“ alone, who can any way *bid* for *Happiness*
“ with the honest Man. True Interest is
“ wholly on the one Side or the other,
“ All between is Inconsistency, Irresolution,
“ Remorse, Vexation, and an Ague-fit.”
Neither is this Acknowledgment peculiar
to himself: “ To be *consistent* either in Vir-
“ tue or in Vice,” was the farthest that
some of the most penetrating among the
Ancients could carry the Point of *Morals*².
Thus where the *selfish* or *malevolent* Af-
fections happen to prevail, there can be no
internal *Motive*, or natural *Obligation* to
Virtue.

ON the contrary, where the amiable Af-
fections of Hope, Candour, Generosity, and

* *Moralists*, Part i. † *Wit and Hum.* Part iv. § 1.

² See Arrian. *Epiet.* lib. iii. c. 15.

Benevo-

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 185

Benevolence predominate, in this best and SECT.
VII. happiest of Tempers, Virtue hath indeed all the Force and Energy, which the noble Writer attributes to her Charms. For where the Calls of Sense are weak, the Imagination active and refined, the public Affections predominant; there the *moral Sense* must naturally reign with uncontrouled Authority; must produce all that Self-Satisfaction, that Conscioufness of merited Kindness and Esteem, in which, his Lordship affirms, the very Essence of our Obligation to Virtue doth consist. This shall with Pleasure be acknowledged, nay asserted, as “the happiest of all Temperaments,” whenever it can be *found* or *acquired*. To a Mind thus formed, Virtue doth indeed bring an *immediate* and *ample Reward* of perfect Peace and sincere Happiness in all the common Situations of Life. It may therefore be with Truth affirmed, that a Temper thus framed, is indeed naturally and internally obliged to the uniform Practice of Virtue.

THERE are, besides these, an endless Variety of Characters formed from the various Combinations of these essential *Ingredients*; which are not designed as a full
Expression

SECT. VII. *Expression of all the Tempers of Mankind;*

They are the Materials only, out of which these Characters are formed. They are no more than the several Species of *simple Colours* laid, as it were, upon the *Pallet*; which, variously *combined* and associated by the Hand of an experienced Master, would indeed call forth every striking *Resemblance*, every changeful Feature of the *Heart of Man*.

Now, among all this infinite Variety of Tempers which is found in Nature, we see there cannot be any uniform Motive or Obligation to Virtue, save only “ where the “ Senses are weak, the Imagination refined, “ and the public Affections strongly predominant.” For in every other Character, where either the Senses, gross Imagination, or selfish Passions prevail, a natural Opposition or Discordance must arise, and destroy the uniform Motive to Virtue, by throwing the Happiness of the Agent into a different Channel. How seldom this sublime Temper is to be found, is hard to say: But this may be affirmed with Truth, that every Man is not *really* possessed of it in the Conduct of Life, who *enjoys* it in *Imagination*, or *admires* it in his Closet, as it lies in the En-

I
quiry

quiry concerning *Virtue*. A Character of SECT. VII.
 this supreme Excellence must needs be *ap-*
proved by most: And the *Heart* of Man be-
 ing an unexhausted Fountain of *Self-Deceit*,
 what it *approves*, is forward to think itself
 possessed of. Thus a lively *Imagination*
 and unperceived *Self-Love*, fetter the Heart
 in certain *ideal* Bonds of their own creating:
 Till at Length some turbulent and furious
 Passion arising in its Strength, breaks these
 fantastic Shackles which Fancy had im-
 posed, and leaps to its Prey like a *Tyger*
 chained by *Cobwebs*.

SECTION VIII.

FROM these different Views of hu- SECT. VIII.
 man Nature, let us now bring this Argu-
 ment to a Conclusion.

THE noble Writer's Scheme of Morals
 therefore, being grounded on a Supposition,
 which runs through the whole Course of
 his Argument, that "all Mankind are na-
 "turally capable of attaining a *Taste* or *Re-*
 "lish for *Virtue*, sufficient for every Pur-
 "pose of social Life," seems essentially de-
 fective. For, from the Enquiry already
 made into the real and various Constitution
 of

SECT.
VIII.

of Man, it appears, that a great Part of the Species are naturally incapable of this *fancied* Excellence. That the various Mixture and Predominancy of *Sense*, *Imagination*, and *Passion*, give a different Cast and Complexion of Mind to every Individual: That the *Feeling* or *Prospect* of Happiness can only arise from this Combination: That consequently, where the benevolent Affections and moral Sense are weak, the selfish Passions and Perceptions headstrong, there can be no internal Motive or natural Obligation to the *consistent* Practice of Virtue.

THE most plausible Pretence I could ever meet with, amidst all the Pomp of Declamation thrown out in Support of this *All-Sufficiency* of a *Taste* in Morals, is this.
 “ That although the Force and Energy of
 “ this Taste for Virtue appears not in every
 “ Individual, yet the Power lies dormant in
 “ every human Breast; and needs only be
 “ called forth by a *voluntary Self-Discipline*,
 “ in order to be brought to its just Per-
 “ fection. That the Improvement in our
 “ Taste in Morals is parallel to the Progress
 “ of the Mind in every other Art and Ex-
 “ cellence, in *Painting*, *Music*, *Architecture*,
 “ *Poetry* :

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 189

“ *Picture*: In which, a *true Taste*, how-
“ ever *natural* to Man, is not born with
“ him, but formed and brought forth to
“ Action by a proper *Study* and *Applica-*
“ *tion.*”

SECT.
VIII.

THE noble Writer hath innumerable Passages of this Kind: So many indeed, that it were Labour lost to transcribe them^a. And one of his Followers hath affirmed in still more emphatical Expressions, if possible, than his Master, that “ the Height of “ *Virtuoso-ship* is VIRTUE^b.”

Now this State of the Case, though at first View it carries some Degree of Plausibility, yet, on a closer Examination, destroys the whole System. For if, as it certainly is, the *Capacity* for a Taste in *Morals*, be similar to a *Capacity* for a Taste in *Arts*; 'tis clear, that the most assiduous Culture or Self-Discipline can never make it even *general*, much less *universal*. One Man, we see, hath a Capacity or Genius for Painting, another for Music, a third for Architecture, a fourth for Poetry. Torture each of them as you please, you cannot infuse a Taste for any, but his own *congenial* Art. If you at-

^a *Charact.* passim.
lemon, Let. vi.

^b *Letters of Hydaspes to Phi-*

SECT.
VIII.

tempt to make the Poet an Architect, or the Painter a Musician, you may make a pretending *Pedant*, never an accomplished *Master*. 'Tis the same in Morals: Where the benevolent Affections are naturally strong, *there* is a *Capacity* for a high *Taste* in Virtue: Where these are *weak* or *wanting*, there is in the same Proportion, *little* or *no Capacity* for a *Taste* in Virtue. To harangue, therefore, on the superior Happiness attending the Exercise of the public Affections, is quite foreign to the Purpose. This superior Happiness is allowed, where the public Affections can be *found* or *made* predominant. But how can any Consequence be drawn from hence, so as to influence those who never felt the Impulse of public Affection? Are not the Pleasures of Poetry, Painting, Music, sublime, pure, and lasting, to those who *taste* them? Doth it therefore follow, that all Mankind, or any of them, can be harangued into a *Taste* and *Love* of these elegant Arts, while the very Capacity of receiving Pleasure from them is *wanting*? Thus in Morals, where a similar Incapacity takes Place through the natural Want of a lively Benevolence, no Progress can ever be made in the *Taste* or *Relish* for virtuous Enjoyment.

joyment. Though therefore you should SECT. VIII.
 prove, as indeed one of Lord SHAFTES-
 BURY's Followers hath done, "that Virtue
 "is accommodate to all Places and Times,
 "is *durable, self-derived, and indeprivable*,"
 whence he concludes, it has the best Title
 to the Character of the sovereign Good;
 yet all the while, the main Point in Debate
 is taken for granted, that is, "whether the
 "Possession of it be any *Good* at all." Now
 to those who receive no Increase of *internal*
 Happiness from it, it cannot be a *Good*:
 And where there is a natural *Defect* of be-
 nevolent Affection, it can give no *internal*
 Happiness: Consequently, though it have
 all the other Characters of the *Summum*
Bonum, though it be *durable, self-derived,*
 and *indeprivable*, it can never, by such, be
 regarded as the *sovereign Good*.

'Tis pleasant enough to observe the Ar-
 gumentation of the Writer last mentioned.
 After describing "the fairest and most ami-
 "able of Objects, the true and perfect Man,
 "that Ornament of Humanity, that god-
 "like Being, without Regard either to Plea-
 "sure or Pain, uninfluenced either by Pro-
 "sperity or Adversity, superior to the World,

'Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On Happiness.

"and

SECT.
VIII.

“and its best and worst Events”---He then raiseth an Objection---“Does not this System border a little upon the Chimerical?”---On my Word, a shrewd Question, and well worth a good Answer; and thus he clears it up,---“It seems to require, said I, a Perfection to which no Individual ever arrived. That very Transcendence, said he, is an Argument on its behalf. Were it of a Rank inferior, it would not be that Perfection which we seek. Would you have it, said I, beyond Nature? If you mean, replied he, beyond any particular or individual Nature, most undoubtedly I would^d.” ’Tis not therefore to be wondered at, that this Gentleman, wrapped up in *Visions* of ideal Perfection, should express “his Contempt of those superficial Censurers, who profess to refute what they want even Capacities to comprehend^e.” Doubtless he means those *groveling* Observers, who draw their Ideas of Mankind “from particular or individual Natures,” and have not yet risen to “the *beatific Vision*^f of the perfect Man.” Indeed, the Gentleman frankly owns, “that

^d Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. *On Happiness*, p. 215. ^e Ibid. p. 108. ^f Ibid.

“ Practice

“Practice too often *creeps*, where Theory SECT. VIII.
“can *soar*.” And this I take to be a true
Account of the Matter.

THUS, as according to these Moralists, the *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue is similar to a Taste for Arts; so what is said of the Poet, the Painter, and Musician, may with equal Truth be said of the Man of Virtue---*Nascitur, non fit*. Hence it is evident, that the noble Writer’s System, which supposeth all Men capable of this exalted Taste, is chimerical and groundless.

BUT even supposing all Men capable of this refined Taste in Morals, there would arise an unanswerable Objection against the Efficacy of this refined Theory. Though it were allowed, that all Mankind have the same delicate Perception of *moral*, as some few have of *natural* Beauty, yet the Parallel would by no means hold, that “as the *Virtuoso* always pursues his Taste in Arts “*consistently*, so the Man of *Virtue* must be “equally *consistent* in *Action* and *Beha-* “*viour*.” For the *Virtuoso* being only engaged in mere *Speculation*, hath no opposite Affections to counteract his Taste: He

§ Three Treat. by J. H. Treat. 3^d. On *Happiness*, p. 108.

194 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. meets with no Obstructions in his Admira-
VIII. tion of Beauty: His Enthusiasm takes its unbounded Flight, not retarded by any Impediments of a discordant Nature. But the Man of *Virtue* hath a different and more difficult Task to perform: He hath often a numerous Train of Passions, and these perhaps the most violent to oppose: He must labour through the surrounding Demands and Allurements of selfish Appetite: Must subdue the Sollicitations of every the most natural Affection, when it opposes the Dictates of a pure Benevolence. Hence even supposing the most refined Taste for Virtue common to all, it must ever be retarded in its Progress, often baffled and overthrown amidst the *Struggle* of contending *Passions*.

THIS seems to be a full and sufficient Reply to all that can be urged in Support of this fantastic System from a View of *human Nature*. But as the noble Writer hath attempted to confirm his Theory by some collateral Arguments of another Kind, it may be proper here to consider their real Weight.

HE urges, therefore, the Probability at least, if not the certain Truth of his Hypothesis from hence, " That it would be an
 " Impu-

“ Imputation on the Wisdom of the Deity SECT. VIII.
 “ to suppose that he had formed Man so
 “ imperfect, that the true Happiness of the
 “ Individual should not always coincide
 “ with that of the whole Kind^b.” And
 beyond Question, the Assertion is true: But
 the Consequence he draws from it, “ that
 “ therefore human Happiness must always
 “ consist in the immediate Feeling of virtu-
 “ ous Enjoyment,” is utterly groundless.
 This Inference seems to have been drawn
 from a View of the *Brute* Creation; in
 which, we find, *Instincts* or *immediate Feel-*
ings are the only Motives to Action; and in
 which, we find too, that these immediate
 Propensities are *sufficient* for all the Pur-
 poses of their Being. In this Constitution
 of Things the Creator’s Wisdom is emi-
 nently displayed; because, through a Defect
 of *Reason* or *Reflexion*, no other kind of
 Principle could possibly have taken Place.
 But the Conclusion drawn from thence,
 “ that Man must have a similar Strength of
 “ Instinct implanted in him, in order to di-
 “ rect him to his supreme Happiness,”
 this is without Foundation: Because the
 Deity hath given him not only *present* Per-

^b Enquiry.

196 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. VIII. *ceptions, but Reason, Reflexion, and a Foresight of future Good and Evil, together with a sufficient Power to obtain the one, and avoid the other. As therefore Man hath sufficient Notices of the moral Government of God, which will at length produce a perfect Coincidence between the virtuous Conduct and the Happiness of every Individual, it implies no essential Defect of Wisdom in the Creator, to suppose that he hath not given this universal and unerring Bias towards Virtue to the whole human Species. Man is enabled to pursue and obtain his proper Happiness by Reason; Brutes by Instinct.*

AGAIN, the noble Writer often attempts to strengthen his Argument, by “representing the *external Good* which naturally flows from *Virtue*, and the *external Evils* which naturally attend on Viceⁱ.” But sure this is rather deserting than confirming his *particular* Theory; which is, to prove that Happiness is *essential* to *Virtue*, and *inseparable* from it: “That Misery is *essential* to *Vice*, and inseparable from it.”---Now, in bringing his Proofs from Happiness or Misery of the *external* Kind, he surely deserts his original Intention: Be-

ⁱ *Enquiry*, B. ii. P. i. § 3.

cause

cause these *Externals* are not *immediate*, but SECT. VIII.
consequential, not *certain*, but *contingent* : —

They are precisely of the Nature of *Reward* and *Punishment*; and therefore can have no Part in the Question now before us; which relates solely to “ that Happiness or Misery
“ arising from the inward State of the
“ *Mind, Affections, and moral Sense*, on the
“ Commission of Vice, or the Practice of
“ *Virtue.*” And this hath been already considered at large.

HOWEVER, that nothing may be omitted which can even remotely affect the Truth; we may observe, in passing, that after all the laboured and *well-meant* Declamation on this Subject, 'tis much easier to prove, “ that
“ *Vice* is the Parent of *external* Misery, than
“ that *Virtue* is the Parent of *external* Happiness.” 'Tis plain, that no Man can be vicious in any considerable *Degree*, but he must suffer either in his *Health*, his *Fame*, or *Fortune*. Now the Generality of Moralists, after proving or illustrating this, have taken it for granted, as a certain Consequence, that the external Goods of Life are, by the Law of Contraries, in a similar Manner annexed to the Practice of Virtue. But in Reality the Proof can reach no further than to shew

SECT. the happy Consequences of *Innocence*, which
 VIII. is a very different Thing from *Virtue*; for

Innocence is only the *abstaining* from *Evil*; *Virtue*, the actual Production of *Good*. Now 'tis evident indeed, that by *abstaining* from *Evil* (that is, by *Innocence*) we *must* stand clear of the Miseries to which we expose ourselves by the *Commission* of it: And this is as far as the Argument will go. But if we rigorously examine the external Consequences of an *active* *Virtue*, in such a World as this; we shall find, it must be often maintained at the Expence both of *Health*, *Ease*, and *Fortune*; often the Loss of Friends, and Increase of Enemies; not to mention the unwearied Diligence of *Envy*, which is ever watchful and prepared to blast distinguished Merit. In the mean time, the *innocuous* Man sits unmolested and tranquil; loves *Virtue*, and *praiseth* it; avoids the *Miseries* of *Vice*, and the *Fatigues* of *active* *Virtue*; offends no Man, and therefore is beloved by all; and for the rest, makes it up by fair *Words* and civil Deportment. " Thus *Innocence*, and not *Virtue*; *Ab-*
 " *stinence* from *Evil*, not the *Production* of
 " *Good*, is the furthest Point to which
 " Mankind in general can be carried, from
 " a Re-

“ a Regard to the *external* Consequences of ^{SECT.}
“ Action.” _{VIII.}

BUT whenever Appearances grow too strong against the noble Writer's System, he takes Refuge in an --- *apage Vulgus!* --- As he had before allowed, that “ the Vulgar may swallow any sordid Jest or Buffoonry,” so here he frequently suggests, that among the same Ranks, “ any kind of sordid Pleasure will go down.” But “ as it must be a finer Kind of Wit that takes with the Men of Breeding,” so in Morals the *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue, is what naturally prevails in the higher Stages of Life: That the *liberal* and *polished* Part of Mankind are disposed to treat every other Principle of Action as groundless and *imaginary*: But that among these, the *Taste* in Morals, if properly cultivated, must needs be sufficient for all the Purposes of “ Virtue^k.”

IN reply to this, which is perhaps the weakest Pretence of all that the noble Writer hath alledged, we need only observe, that those who are born to *Honours*, *Power*, and *Fortune*, come into the World with the

^k See Misc. 3^d. c. 2. and many other detached Passages.

SECT.
VIII.

same *various* Mixture and *Predominancy* of *Sense*, *Imagination*, and *Affections*, with the *lowest* Ranks of Mankind. So that if they really enjoy better Opportunities of being compleatly virtuous, these must arise not from their internal *Constitution*, but their external *Situation* in Life. Let us examine how far this may give a Bias either towards Vice or Virtue.

Now 'tis plain that, with regard to the *Senses* or bodily *Appetites*, the Possession of Power and Fortune must be rather hurtful than favourable to Virtue. Wealth gives Opportunity of *Indulgence*, and Indulgence naturally *inflames*. Hence the Habits of *sensual* Inclination must in general be stronger in the *Lord* than the *Peasant*: Therefore, as nothing tends so much to imbrute the Man, and sink every nobler Affection of the Mind, as a servile Attendance on sensual Pleasure; so in this Regard, the Possession of Power and Fortune is rather *dangerous* than favourable to Virtue.

THE same may be affirmed in respect to the *Passions* or *Affections*. Can any thing tend so much to render any Passion ungovernable, as to know that we *need not* govern it? That our Power, Riches, and Authority,

thority, raise us above *Controul*? That we can hate, oppress, revenge, with *Impunity*? Are not the *Great*, of all others, most obnoxious to *Flattery*? Does not this tend to produce and nourish an *overweening* Opinion of *themselves*, an unjust *Contempt* of *others*? And is not *true Virtue* more likely to be *lost* than improved, amidst all these surrounding Temptations?

SECT.
VIII.

THE *Imagination* indeed is often refined, and *Reason* improved, in the higher Ranks of Life, beyond the Reach of the *mere Vulgar*. But they are little acquainted with human Nature, who think that *Reason* and *Imagination*, among the Bulk of Mankind, are any thing more than the *Ministers* of the *ruling Appetites* and *Passions*: Especially where the Appetites and Passions are inflamed by the *early* and *habitual* Possession of Honours, Power, and Riches.

BUT still it will be urged, that the *Great* are under the Dominion of a powerful Principle, which is almost unknown among the *Vulgar*:---The Principle of HONOUR---which is a perfect *Balance* against all these surrounding Difficulties, and a full *Security* to *Virtue*.

WITH

SECT.
VIII.

WITH regard to this *boasted* Principle, a very material Distinction must be made. By *Honour*, is sometimes meant "an Affection of Mind determining the Agent to the Practice of what is right, without any Dependence on other Men's Opinions." Now this is but the *moral Sense*, under a new Appellation: It ariseth too, not from any particular *Situation* of Life, but from the natural *Constitution* of the Mind. Accordingly, it is not confined to any one Rank of Men, but is seen promiscuously among the *Great* and *Vulgar*. 'Tis therefore entirely beyond the present Question, which only relates to such Circumstances as are peculiar to *high Life*.

THE other, and more common Acceptation of the Word *Honour*, and in which alone it belongs peculiarly to the *Great*, is "an Affection of the Mind determining the Agent to such a Conduct, as may gain him the *Applause* or *Esteem* of those whose good Opinion he is fond of." Now this Love of *Fame*, and Fear of *Disgrace*, though, as a *secondary* Motive to Action, it be often of the highest Consequence in Life; though it often *counterfeits*, sometimes even *rivals* Benevolence itself; yet as

a *principal* Motive, there cannot be a more SECT.
VIII.
precarious Foundation of Virtue. For the
Effects of this Principle will always depend
on the *Opinions* of others: It will always
take its particular Complexion from *these*,
and must always *vary* with them. Thus
'tis a Matter of mere *Accident*, whether its
Consequences be *good* or *bad*, *wholesome* or
pernicious. If the *applauded Maxims* be
founded in *Benevolence*, the Principle will so
far lead to *Virtue*: If they be founded in
Pride, *Folly*, or *Contempt*, the Principle will
lead to *Vice*. And, without any designed
Satire on the *Great*, it must be owned, the
latter of *these* hath ever been the *predomi-
nant* Character of *Honour*. It were false
indeed to affirm, that the Principle hath no
Mixture of *benevolent* Intention; yet 'tis
equally clear, that its *chief* Design is not so
much to secure the *Happiness* of *all*, as to
maintain the *Superiority* of a *few*: And
hence this Principle hath ever led its Vota-
ries to abhor the Commission, not so much
of what is *unjust*, as of what is *contemptible*.
Thus it is clear, that the Principle of *Ho-
nour*, as distinguished from *benevolent* Af-
fection and the *moral Sense*, can never be a
sufficient

204 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. VIII. sufficient Foundation for the *uniform* Practice of *Virtue*.

THESE are the main Arguments by which the noble Writer hath attempted to support this imagined *All-sufficiency* of the *Relish* or *Taste* in *Morals*. Had human Nature been indeed that *uniform* and *noble* Thing, which he seems to have *thought* it, he had surely been right in fixing the *Obligations* of *Man* to *Virtue*, on so generous and amiable a Principle. But as on Examination it appears, that he hath all along supposed this human Nature to be *what it is not*, his System is *visionary* and *groundless*; and his applauded Theory only fit to find a Place with the boasted-Power of the great old *Geometer*, when he said --- *δος πας εω, και τλω γλω κνησω*¹.

MOST full indeed and clear to this purpose are the Words of the noble Writer himself: Who, in his *miscellaneous* Capacity, and in a *merry* Mood, seems to have spoken more of Truth, than I believe he would care to stand to.---“ Such has been “ of late our dry Task. No wonder if it “ carries, indeed, a *meagre* and *raw* Ap-

¹ Give me but a *Place* to set my Foot on, and I will move the whole Earth.

“ pearance.

“ pearance. It may be looked on in Philo-
 “ sophy, as worse than a mere *Egyptian*
 “ Imposition. For to make Brick without
 “ Straw or Stubble, is perhaps an easier
 “ Labour, than to prove Morals without a
 “ World, and establish a Conduct of Life,
 “ without the Supposition of any thing
 “ living or extant besides our *immediate*
 “ *Fancy*, and World of *Imagination*^m. ”

THESE Sallies might possibly have seem-
 ed difficult to account for, had not the no-
 ble Writer himself saved us the Labour of
 this Task. For he elsewhere tells us, that
 “ all sound *Love* and Admiration is ENTHU-
 “ SIASM: The Transports of Poets, Ora-
 “ tors, Musicians, Virtuosi; the Spirit of
 “ Travellers and Adventurers; Gallantry,
 “ War, Heroism; all, all Enthusiasm! ’Tis
 “ enough: I am content to be this new EN-
 “ THUSIASTⁿ. ” --- And thus in another Place
 he describes the Effects of this high Passion:
 That “ *Enthusiasm* is wonderfully powerful
 “ and extensive:---For when the Mind is
 “ *taken up in Vision*,---its Horror, Delight,
 “ Confusion, Fear, *Admiration*, or *whatever*
 “ *Passion* belongs to it, or is uppermost on
 “ this Occasion, will have something *vast*,

^m Misc. iv. c. 2.

ⁿ *Moralists*, sub fin.

“ *immane*,

206 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. " *immane*, and, as Painters say, BEYOND
VIII. " LIFE. And this is what gave Occasion
" to the Name of *Fanaticism*, as it was used
" by the Ancients in its original Sense, for
" *an APPARITION transporting the MIND*°."

SECTION IX.

SECT. HAVING sufficiently evinced the *flimsy*,
IX. though curious, Contexture of these *Cobweb*
Speculations *spun* in the *Closet*, let us now
venture abroad into the World; let us pro-
ceed to something applicable to Life and
Manners; and consider what are the real
Motives, by which Mankind may be sway'd
to the *uniform* Practice of *Virtue*.

AND first, in Minds of a *gentle* and *gene-
rous* Disposition, where the sensual Appetites
are weak, the Imagination refined, and the
benevolent Affections naturally predomi-
nant; these very Affections, and the *moral*
Sense arising from them, will in all the com-
mon Occurrences of Life secure the Prac-
tice of Virtue. To these fine Tempers
thus happily formed, the inward Satisfaction
of a virtuous Conduct exceeds that of every
outward Acquisition; and affords to its Pos-

° *Letter on Enthusiasm.*

cessor

essor a more true and lasting Happiness, SECT.
IX.
than Wealth, or Fame, or Power can be-
flow.

SECONDLY, Where the same Degrees of public Affection subsist, but stand opposed by sensual or selfish Passions of equal Violence, even here the Agent may rise to very high Degrees of Virtue, but not without the Aids of *Discipline* and *Culture*. Yet 'tis observable, that the Virtues of such a Temper are rather *conspicuous* than *consistent*: Without some strengthening Assistance, the Progress of the Mind towards Perfection is often broke by the Sallies of disordered Passion.

THERE is yet another Character, essentially different from these, but seldom distinguished, because generally taken for the *first*. Many esteem themselves, and are esteemed by others, as having arrived at the most *consummate Virtue*, whose Conduct never merits a higher Name than that of being *innocuous*. This is generally the Case of those who love *Retreat* and *Contemplation*, of those whose Passions are naturally *weak*, or carefully *guarded* by what the World calls *Prudence*. Now, as in the last mentioned Character, a *Curb* from *Irregularity* was requisite, so here a *Spur* to *Action* is equally
necessary

SECT. IX. necessary for the Support and Security of
Virtue.

As we descend through more common and inferior Characters, the internal Motives to virtuous Action grow less and less effectual. *Weak* or *no* Benevolence, a moral Sense proportionably *dull*, strong sensual *Appetites*, a clamorous Train of *selfish* Affections, these mixed and varied in endless Combinations, form the real Character of the *Bulk* of Mankind: Not only in *Cottages*, but in *Cities*, *Churches*, *Camps*, and *Courts*. So that some stronger Ties, some Motives more efficacious are necessary, not only for the Perfection of *Virtue*, but the Welfare, nay, the very Being of *Society*.

'Tis not denied, nay, 'tis meant and insisted on, that among all these various Characters and Tempers, the Culture of the benevolent Affections ought to be assiduously regarded. For though we have seen that the Design of introducing an universal high *Relish* or *Taste* for Virtue be *visionary* and *vain*, yet still a lower, or a lower Degree may *possibly* be instilled. We have only attempted to prove, that the Capacity for this high Taste in Morals is not universally or essentially interwoven with the human Frame,

Frame, but dispensed in various Degrees, in SECT.
IX. the same Manner as the Capacity for a Taste in *inferior Beauties, in Architecture, Painting, Poetry, and Music.*

To remedy this *Defect* of *unerring* Instinct in Man, by which he becomes a Creature so much less consistent than the Brute Kinds, Providence hath afforded him not only a Sense of *present*, but a Foresight of *future Good and Evil.*

HENCE the Force of human Laws, which being established by common Consent, for the Good of all, endeavour, so far as their Power can reach, by the Infliction of Punishment on Offenders, to establish the general Happiness of Society, by making the *acknowledged Interest* of every *Individual* to coincide and unite with the *public Welfare.*

BUT as human Laws cannot reach the *Heart* of Man; as they can only inflict *Punishment* on Offenders, but cannot bestow *Rewards* on the Obedient; as *there* are many Duties of *imperfect* Obligation which they cannot recognize; as *Force* will sometimes *defy*, and *Cunning* often *elude* their Power; so without some further Aids, some Motives to Action more *universally* interest-
P ing,

210 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. IX. ing, Virtue must still be left betrayed and deserted.

Now as it is clear from the Course of these Observations, that nothing can work this great Effect, but what can produce “an entire and universal Coincidence between private and public Happiness;” so is it equally evident, that nothing can effectually convince Mankind, that their own Happiness universally depends on *procuring*, or at least *not violating* the Happiness of others, save only “the lively and active Belief of an all-seeing and all-powerful God, who will hereafter make them happy or miserable, according as they designedly promote or violate the Happiness of their Fellow-Creatures.” And this is the *Essence* of RELIGION.

THIS, at first View, should seem a Motive or Principle of Action, sufficient for all the Purposes of Happiness and Virtue. Indeed the Bulk of Mankind seem agreed in this Truth. Yet refining Tempers, who love to quit the common Tracks of Opinion, have been bold enough to call even this in Question. Among these, the noble Writer hath been one of the most diligent:
It

It will therefore be necessary to consider the Weight of his Objections. SECT.
IX.

To prevent Misinterpretation, it may be proper to observe, that Lord SHAFTESBURY sometimes talks in earnest of the *Nobleness* and *Dignity of Religion*. But when he explains himself, it appears, he confines his Idea of it to that Part which consists solely in Gratitude to, and Adoration of the supreme Being, without any Prospect of future Happiness or Misery. Now, though indeed this be the noblest Part, yet it is beyond the Reach of all, save only those who are capable of the most *exalted* Degrees of Virtue. His Theory of *Religion* therefore is precisely of a Piece, with his Theory of the *moral Sense*; not calculated for Use, but Admiration; and only existing in the Place where they had their Birth; that is, as the noble Writer well expresseth it, in a *Mind taken up in Vision*.

HE sometimes talks, or seems to talk, in earnest too, on the *Usefulness of Religion*, in the common Acceptation of the Word. With Regard to which 'tis only necessary to observe, that whatever he hath said on this Subject I readily assent to: But this is no Reason why it may not be necessary to ob-

SECT. IX. viate every thing he hath thrown out to the contrary, to prejudice common Readers against Religion, through the Vanity of being thought *Original*. To *invent* what is *just* or *useful*, is the Character of *Genius*: 'Tis *Folly* only and *Impertinence* to broach *Absurdities*.

FIRST, therefore, he often asserts, that
 “ the Hope of future Reward and Fear of
 “ future Punishment is utterly unworthy
 “ of the free Spirit of a Man, and only fit
 “ for those who are destitute of the very
 “ first Principles of common Honesty: He
 “ calls it *miserable, vile, mercenary*: And
 “ compares those who allow it any Weight,
 “ to *Monkies* under the Discipline of the
 “ Whip^P.”

IN Answer to these general Cavils (probably aimed principally at *Revelation*) which are only difficult to confute, as they are vague and fugitive, let it be observed, first; that whatever can be objected against *religious* Fear, holds good against the Fear of *human* Laws. They *both* threaten the Delinquent with the Infliction of Punishment, nor is the Fear of the one more unworthy, than of the other. Yet the noble Writer

^P *Wit and Humour — Enquiry — &c.*

himself

himself often speaks with the highest Re-
spect of *Legislators*, of the Founders of
Society and *Empire*, who, by the Establish-
ment of wise and wholesome Laws, drew
Mankind from their State of natural Bar-
barity, to that of cultivated Life and social
Happiness: Unless indeed he supposes that
ORPHEUS and the rest of them did their
Business *literally* by *Taste* and a *Fiddle*. If
therefore the just Fear of *human* Power
might be enforced without insulting or vio-
lating the *Generosity* of our Nature, whence
comes it, that a just Fear of the *Creator*
should so miserably degrade the Species?
The religious Principle holds forth the same
Motive to Action, and only differs from the
other, as the Evil it threatens is infinitely
greater, and more lasting.

FURTHER: If we consider the religious
Principle in its true Light, there is nothing
in it either *mean*, *slavish*, or *unworthy*. To
be in a *Fright* indeed, to live under the Sug-
gestions of *perpetual Terror* (in which, the
noble Writer would persuade us, the religi-
ous Principle consists) is far from an amia-
ble Condition. But this belongs only to
the *Superstitious* or the *Guilty*. The first of
these are *falsely* religious; and to the last, I

SECT.
IX.

imagine the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers will acknowledge, it *ought* to belong. But to the rest of Mankind, the *religious* Principle or *Fear* of GOD is of a quite different Nature. It only implies a lively and habitual Belief, that we shall be hereafter miserable, if we disobey his Laws. Thus every wise Man, nay, every Man of common Understanding, hath a *like Fear* of every *possible Evil*; of the destructive Power of natural Agents, of *Fire, Water, Serpents, Poison*: Yet none of these Fears, more than the religious one, imply a State of *perpetual* Misery and Apprehension: None of them are inconsistent with the most generous Temper of Mind, or truest Courage. None of them imply more than a *rational Sense* of these several Kinds of Evil; and from that Sense, a *Determination to avoid them*. Thus the noble Writer himself, when it answers a different Purpose, acknowledges that "a Man of Courage may be *cautious* without "real Fear^a." Now the Word *Caution*, in its very Nature, implies a Sense of a Possibility of Evil, and from that Sense a Determination to avoid it: Which is the very

^a *Inquiry*, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 215

Essence of the religious Principle or the SECT.
Fear of God. IX.

AND as to the other Branch of religious Principle, “the Hope and Prospect of
“higher Degrees of future Happiness and
“Perfection :”---What is there of *mean*,
slavish, or *unworthy* in it? Are all Mankind
to be blown up into the *Mock-majesty* of the
kingly STOIC, seated on the Throne of *Ar-*
rogance, and *lording* it in an *empty* Region
of CHIMÆRA’S? Is not the Prospect of
Happiness the great universal Hinge of hu-
man Action? Do not all the Powers of the
Soul centre in this one Point? Doth not the
noble Writer himself elsewhere acknow-
ledge this^r? And that our Obligations to
Virtue itself can only arise from this one
Principle, that it gives us real Happiness?
Why then should the Hope of a happy Im-
mortality be branded as *base* and *slavish*,
while the Consciousness or Prospect of a
happy Life on Earth is regarded as a just
and honourable Motive?

THE noble Writer indeed confesseth, that
“if by the Hope of Reward, be understood
“the Love and Desire (he ought to have
“said, the *Hope*) of *virtuous Enjoyment*, it

^r See above, Sect. VI. of this Essay.

216 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. IX. "is not derogatory to Virtue." But that in every other Sense, the indulged Hope of Reward is not only mean and mercenary, but even *hurtful* to Virtue and common *Humanity*: "For in this religious Sort of Discipline, the Principle of *Self-Love*, which "is *naturally so prevailing* in us (*indeed?*) "being no way moderated or restrained, "but rather improved and made stronger "every Day, by the Exercise of the Passions in a Subject of more extended Self-Interest; there may be reason to apprehend lest the Temper of this kind should "extend itself in general through all the "Parts of Life."

THIS, to say the best of it, is the very *Pbrenzy* of Virtue. Religion proposeth true Happiness as the End and Consequence of virtuous Action: This is granted. It proposeth it by such Motives as must influence Self-Love, and consequently hath given the best Means of procuring it. Yet, it seems, Self-Love being not restrained, but made stronger, will make Mankind miss of true Happiness. That is, by leading Self-Love into the Path of *true* Happiness, Religion will inevitably conduct it to *false*; by commanding us to *cherish* our *public* Affections,

fections, it will certainly *inflamm*e the *private* ones; by assuring us, that if we would be happy hereafter, we must be *virtuous* and *benevolent*, it will beyond Question render us *vile* and *void* of *Benevolence*. But this Mode of Reasoning is common with the noble Writer.

SECT.
IX.

HOWEVER, at other Times his Lordship can descend to the Level of common Sense; and prosecute his Argument by Proofs diametrically opposite to what he here advanceth. For in proving the Obligations of Man to Virtue, after having modelled the inward State of the human Mind according to his own Imagination, he proceeds to consider the *Passions* which regard *ourselves*, and draws another, and indeed a stronger Proof from *these*.---He there proves^{*} the Folly of a vicious Love of Life, “because
“Life itself may often prove a Misfortune.” So of *Cowardice*, “because it often robs us
“of the Means of Safety.”---Excessive *Resentment*, “because the Gratification is no
“more than an Alleviation of a racking
“Pain.”---The Vice of Luxury “creates
“a Nauseating, and Distaste, Diseases, and
“constant Craving.” He urges the same Ob-

* *Inquiry*, B. ii. Part ii. § 3.

jections

SECT. IX. jections against intemperate Pleasure of the
 amorous kind. He observes that Ambition is ever "suspicious, jealous, captious, "and incapable of bearing the least Dis-
 "appointment." He then proceeds thro' a Variety of other Passions, proving them all to be the Sources of some internal or external Misery. Thus he awakens the same Passions of *Hope* and *Fear*, which, in a religious View, he so bitterly inveighs against. Thus he exhibits a Picture of future *Rewards* and *Punishments*, even of the most *selfish* Kind: He recommends the Conformity to Virtue, on the Score both of present and future *Advantage*: He *deters* his Reader from the Commission of Vice, by representing the Misery it will produce. And these too, such *Advantages* and such *Miseries*, as are entirely distinct from the mere Feeling of virtuous Affection or its contrary: From the Considerations of Safety, Alleviation of *bodily* Pain, the Avoidance of *Distaste*, and *Diseases*. Now doth not his own Cavil here recoil upon him?
 "That in this Sort of Discipline, and by
 "exhibiting such Motives as these, the Principle of Self-Love must be made stronger,
 "by the Exercise of the Passions in a Sub-
 "ject

“ject of more extended Self-Interest: And SECT.
IX.
“so there may be Reason to apprehend, lest
“the Temper of this Kind should extend
“itself in general through all the Parts
“of Life.” Thus the Objection proves
equally against both: In Reality, against
neither. For, as we have seen, the *Sense* or
Prospect of Happiness, is the only possible
Motive to Action; and if we are taught to
believe that *virtuous Affection* will produce
Happiness, whether the expected Happiness
lies in *this* Life, or *another*, it will *tend*, and
equally tend, to produce *virtuous Affection*.
The noble Writer, therefore, and his Ad-
mirers, might as well attempt to remove
Mountains, as to prove that the *Hope* and
Prospect of a happy Immortality, can justly
be accounted more servile, mercenary, or
hurtful, than the View of those transient and
earthly Advantages, which his Lordship
hath so rhetorically and honestly display’d,
for the Interest and Security of *Virtue*. In
Truth, they are precisely of the same Na-
ture, and only differ in Time, Duration, and
Degree. They are both established by our
Creator for the same great End of Happi-
ness. And what God hath thus *connected*,
it

220 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. IX. it were *absurd*, as well as *impious*, to attempt
 ——— to *separate* ^t.

THERE is yet another Circumstance observable in human Nature, which still further proves, that the Hope of a happy Immortality hath no Tendency to produce selfish Affection, but its contrary. For let the *stoical* Tribe draw what Pictures they please of the human Species, this is an undoubted Truth, “ that *Hope* is the most universal Source of human *Happiness*: And

^t Hence we may see the Weakness and Mistake of those *falsely religious*, who fall into an *Extreme* directly *opposite* to this of the noble Writer; who are *scandalized* at our being determined to the Pursuit of Virtue through any Degree of Regard to its happy Consequences in this Life; which Regard they call *worldly, carnal, prophane*. For it is evident, that the religious Motive is precisely of the same Kind; only *stronger*, as the Happiness expected is *greater* and more *lasting*. While therefore we set the *proper* and *proportioned* Value upon each, it is impossible we can act irrationally, or offend that God who established *both*.

This naturally leads to a further Observation, which shews the Danger, as well as Folly, of *growling* in *Systems*. Virtue, we see, comes recommended and enforced on three Principles. It is attended with *natural* and immediate *Pleasure* or Advantage:—It is commanded by human *Laws*:—It is enjoined by *Religion*.—Yet the *Religionists* have often decry’d the first of these Sanctions: The *fanatical Moralists*, the *last*: And even the *second* hath not escaped the Madness of an *enthusiastic* Party; which however, never grew considerable enough in this Kingdom, to merit Confutation.

“ that

“ that Man is never so sincerely and heartily SECT.
IX.
“ *benevolent*, as when he is truly *happy* in

“ himself.” Thus the high Consciousness of his being numbered among the Children of God, and that his Lot is among the Saints; that he is destined to an endless Progression of Happiness, and to rise from high to higher Degrees of Perfection, must needs inspire him with that Tranquillity and Joy, which will naturally diffuse itself in Acts of sincere Benevolence to all his Fellow-Creatures, whom he looks upon as his Companions in this Race of Glory. Thus will every noble Passion of the Soul be awakened into Action: While the joyless Infidel, possessed with the gloomy Dread of Annihilation, too naturally contracts his Affections as his Hopes of Happiness decrease; while he considers and despiseth himself, as no more than the Beasts that perish.

THE noble Writer indeed insinuates, that there is “ a certain Narrowness of Spirit, “ occasioned by this Regard to a future “ Life, peculiarly observable in the *devout* “ Persons and *Zealots* of almost every religious Persuasion^v.” In reply to which, ’tis only necessary to affirm, what may be

^v *Enquiry*, B. i. Part iii. § 3.

affirmed

SECT. affirmed with Truth, that with Regard to
 IX. *devout* Persons the Insinuation is a *Falsehood*.

It was prudently done indeed, to join the *Zealots* (or *Bigots*) in the same Sentence; because it is true, that *these*, being under the Dominion of *Superstition*, forget the true Nature and End of *Religion*; and are therefore scrupulously exact in the Observation of outward *Ceremonies*, while they neglect the superior and *essential* Matters of the Law, of *Justice*, *Benevolence*, and *Mercy*.

AND as to the Notion of confining the Hope of future Reward to "that of virtuous Enjoyment only:" This is a *Refinement* parallel to the rest of the noble Writer's System; and, like all Refinements, contracts instead of enlarging our Views. 'Tis allowed indeed, that the Pleasures of Virtue are the highest we know of in our present State; and 'tis therefore commonly supposed, they may constitute our chief Felicity in another. But doth it hence follow, that no other Sources of Happiness may be dispensed, which as yet are utterly unknown to us? Can our narrow and partial Imaginations set Bounds to the Omnipotence of God? And may not our Creator vouchsafe us such Springs of yet untasted Bliss, as shall
 exceed

exceed even the known Joys of Virtue, as SECT. IX.
 far as *these* exceed the Gratifications of
 Sense? Nay, if we consider, what is gene-
 rally believed, that our Happiness will arise
 from an Addition of new and higher Facul-
 ties; that in the present Life, the Exercise
 of Virtue itself ariseth often from the *Imper-*
fection of our State; if we consider these
 Things, it should seem highly probable, that
 our future Happiness will consist in some-
 thing quite beyond our present Compre-
 hension: Will be “such as Eye hath not
 “seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it en-
 “tered into the Heart of Man to conceive.”

SECTION X.

BUT beyond these Objections, the no- SECT. X.
 ble Writer hath more than once touched
 upon another, which merits a particular
 Consideration. For he affirms, that “after
 “all, ’tis not merely what we call *Princi-*
 “*ple*, but a *Taste*, which governs Men.”
 That “even Conscience, such as is owing
 “to religious Discipline, will make but a
 “slight Figure, where this Taste is set
 “amiss^w.”

^w *Misc. iii. c. 2.*

224 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. THE Notion here advanced is not pecu-
 X. liar to himself. He seems to have drawn
 it from a much more considerable Writer,
 who hath endeavoured to support the same
 Proposition by a great Variety of Examples^x.
 Several Authors of inferior Rank have bor-
 rowed the same Topic, for popular Decla-
 mation. Nay, one hath gone so far as to
 assert, "that Man is so unaccountable a
 " Creature, as to act most commonly against
 " his Principle^y."

THE Objection, indeed, carries an Ap-
 pearance of Force: Yet on a near Exami-
 nation it entirely vanisheth.

IT must be owned, that in most Coun-
 tries, a considerable Part of what is called
Religion, deserves no other Name than that
 of *Absurdity* made *sacred*. And it were
 strange indeed, should *Bigotry* and *false* Re-
 ligion produce that Uprightness of Heart,
 that Perfection of Morals, which is the ge-
 nuine Effect of *Truth*.

IT must be owned, that with Regard to
 religious Principle, as well as moral Prac-
 tice, every Man has the Power of being a
Hypocrite. That Knaves, in order to be

^x BAYLE, *Pensf. sur une Comete.*
Bees.

^y *Fable of the*

accounted *honest*, may appear *devout*. And SECT.
X.
we may reasonably suppose, if we consider
the innumerable Artifices of Villainy, that
the outward Profession of Religion becomes
a frequent *Disguise* to an *atheistical* and *cor-*
rupted Heart.

BUT though these Circumstances may
sufficiently account for the Appearance in
many particular Cases, yet, with Regard to
the *general Fact*, *here* seems to lie the pro-
per Solution of the Difficulty. "That even
" where true Religion is known, professed,
" and in Speculation *assented* to, it is seldom
" so thoroughly *inculcated* as to become a
" Principle of Action." We have seen
that Imagination is the universal Instrument
of human Action; that no Passion can be
strongly excited in the Soul by mere Know-
ledge or Assent, till the Imagination hath
formed to itself some kind of Picture or
Representation of the Good or Evil appre-
hended^z. Now the Senses and their attend-
ant Passions are continually urging their
Demands, through the immediate Presence
of their respective Objects: So that nothing
but the *vivid Image* of some greater Good
or Evil in Futurity can possibly resist and

^z See above, Essay I. § 3.

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over-

SECT.
X.

overbalance their Sollicitations. The *Idea* therefore of future Happiness and Misery must be strongly impressed on the Imagination, ere they can work their full Effects, because they are *distant* and *unseen*: But this *Habit* of *Reflexion* is seldom properly fixed by *Education*; and thus for want of a proper Impression, "religious Principle is seldom *gained*, and therefore seldom operates."

BUT where a sincere and lively Impression takes Place; where the Mind is convinced of the Being of a God; that he *is*, and is a *Rewarder* of them that diligently seek him; where the *Imagination* hath gained a Habit of connecting this great Truth with every Thought, Word, and Action; there it may be justly affirmed, that Piety and Virtue cannot but *prevail*. To say, in a Case of this Nature, that Man will not act according to his Principle, is to contradict the full Evidence of known Facts. We see how true Mankind commonly are to their Principle of *Pride*, or mistaken Honour; how true to their Principle of *Avarice*, or mistaken Interest; how true to their Principle, of a Regard to *human* Laws. Why are they so? Because they have strongly and habitually

tually connected these Principles in their Imagination with the Idea of their own Happiness. Therefore, whenever the religious Principle becomes in the same Manner habitually connected in the Imagination, with the Agent's Happiness; that is, whenever the religious Principle takes Place at all, it must needs become infinitely more powerful than any other; because the *Good* it promiseth, and the *Evil* it threatens, are infinitely greater and more lasting. Hence it appears, that the Corruption of Mankind, even where the purest Religion is *professed*, and in Theory *assented* to, doth not arise from the *Weakness* of religious Principle, but the *Want* of it.

AND indeed on other Occasions, and to serve different Purposes, the noble Writer and his Partisans can allow and give Examples of all that is here contended for. Nothing is so common among these Gentlemen, as to declaim against the terrible Effects of *priestly Power*. 'Tis their favourite Topic, to represent Mankind as groaning under the Tyranny of the *sacred Order*. Now what does this Representation imply, but "the Force of religious Principle improperly directed?" If Mankind can be

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fswayed

SECT.
X.

swayed by religious Hope and Fear, to resign their Passions and Interests to the *Artifice*, or Advantage of the *Priest*, why not to the *Benefit* of *Mankind*? 'Tis only impressing a different Idea of *Duty*: The Motive to Action is in both Cases the same, and consequently must be of equal Efficacy. Thus if religious Principle were void of *Force*, the Priesthood must be void of *Power*. The Influence therefore of the Priesthood, however dishonestly applied, is a Demonstration of the Force of *religious Principle*.

This therefore seems to be the Truth. Although, by timely and continued Culture, the religious Principle might be made more universally predominant; yet even as it is, though not so thoroughly inculcated as to become generally a consistent Principle of Action; in Fact it hath a frequent and *considerable*, though *partial* and imperfect Influence. None but the thoroughly Good and Bad act on continued or consistent Principles; all the intermediate Degrees of Good and Bad act at different Times on various and inconsistent Principles; that is, their *Imaginations* are by turns given up to *Impressions* of a *different*, or

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even

even *contrary* Nature. This explains the SECT. X.
 whole Mystery : For, hence it appears that
 the consistent or inconsistent Conduct of
 Men depends not on the Nature of their
 Principles, but on having their Principles,
 whatever they are, *counteracted* by opposite
 ones. Although therefore, through a Fai-
 lure of timely Discipline, Numbers of Men
 appear to be of that capricious Temper as
 not to be steady to any Principle, yet still
 the religious one will *mix* with the rest, and
 naturally *prevail* in its Turn. This is cer-
 tainly a common Circumstance among the
looser and more *inconsiderate* Ranks of Men;
 who, although by no Means uniformly
 swayed by the Precepts of Religion, are yet
 frequently struck with Horror at the
 Thought of Actions *peculiarly* vile, and
 deterred by the Apprehension of an all-
 seeing God from the Commission of Crimes
uncommonly atrocious.

HERE then lies the essential Difference
 between the Efficacy of *Taste*, and *religious*
 Principle: That the first, being a Feeling
 or Perception dispensed in various Degrees,
 and in very weak ones to the Bulk of Man-
 kind, is incapable, even through the most
 assiduous Culture, of becoming an universal

SECT. or consistent Motive to Virtue: But the religious Principle, arising from such Passions as are common to the whole Species, must, if properly inculcated, *universally* prevail.

'Tis evident therefore, that in the very first Dawns of Reason, religious Principles ought to be impressed on the Minds of Children; and this early Culture continued through the succeeding Stages of Life. But as the noble Writer hath strangely attempted to ridicule and dishonour Religion in every Shape; so here, he hath endeavoured to throw an Odium on this Method of religious Discipline, by representing it as the Enemy to true Morals and practical Philosophy, as it fetters the Mind with early Prejudices. "Whatever Manner in Philosophy happens to bear the least Resemblance to that of *Catechism*, cannot, I am persuaded, of itself seem very inviting. Such a smart Way of questioning ourselves in our Youth, has made our Mankind more averse to the *expostulatory* Discipline: And though the metaphysical Points of our Belief, are by this Method with admirable Care and Caution instilled into tender Minds; yet the Manner of this *anticipating* Philosophy may make the

“ the After-work of Reason, and the in- SECT.
 “ ward Exercise of the Mind at a riper X.
 “ Age, proceed the more heavily, and with
 “ greater Reluctance.---’Tis hard, after
 “ having by so many pertinent Interroga-
 “ tories and decisive Sentences, declared
 “ *who* and *what* we are; to come leisurely
 “ in another, to enquire concerning our *real*
 “ *Self* and *End*, the Judgment we are to
 “ make of *Interest*, and the Opinion we
 “ should have of *Advantage* and *Good*:
 “ Which is what must necessarily determine
 “ us in our *Conduct*, and prove the leading
 “ Principle of our Lives^a.”

IN reply to this *most philosophical* Para-
 graph, let it be observed; that it is not the
 Design of Religion to make *Sophists*, but
 good *Subjects* of Mankind. That Man be-
 ing designed, not for *Speculation*, but *Action*,
 religious Principle is not to be instilled in a
philosophical, but a *moral* View: Therefore
 with Regard to *Practice*, nothing can be
 more fit and rational than to impress ac-
 knowledged *Truths* at an Age when the *Re-*
cipient is incapable of their *Demonstrations*;
 in the same Manner as we teach the Me-

^a *Advice, &c.* Part iii. § 2.

SECT. *chanic* to work on Geometric Principles,
 X. while the Proofs are *unknown* to him.

BUT then, the *Prejudices of Education*--- yes, these are the great *Stumbling-block* to a modern *Free-thinker*: It still runs in his Head, that all Mankind are born to dispute *de omni scibili*^b. Let therefore this *minute* Philosopher reflect, first, that a *Prejudice* doth not imply, as is generally supposed, the *Falseness* of the Opinion instilled; but only that it is taken up and held without its proper *Evidence*. Thus a Child may be prejudiced in Favour of Truth, as well as Falseness; and in him neither the one nor the other can properly be called more than an *Opinion*. Further: The human Mind cannot remain in a State of *Indifference*, with regard either to *Opinion* or *Practice*: 'Tis of an *active* Nature; and, like a *fertile* Field, if by due Cultivation it be not made to produce good *Fruit*, will certainly spring up in *Tares* and *Thistles*. Impressions, Opinions, *Prejudices*, of one kind or other a Child will inevitably contract, from the Things and Persons that *surround* him: And if rational Habits and Opinions be not infused, in order to *anticipate* Absurdities;

^b On all Subjects.

Absur-

Absurdities will rise, and *anticipate* all rational Habits and Opinions. His Reason and his *Passions* will put themselves in *Action*, however untoward and inconsistent, in the same Manner as his *Limbs* will make an Effort towards progressive *Motion*, however awkward and absurd. The same Objection therefore that lies against instilling a *salutary Opinion*, will arise against *teaching* him to walk *erect*: For this, too, is a kind of “*anticipating Philosophy*.” And sure, a Child left to his own *Self-Discipline*, “till he could come *leisurely* to enquire concerning his *real Self* and *End*,” would stand as fair a Chance to *grovel* in Absurdity, and bring *down* his Reason to the sordid *Level* of Appetite, as to *crawl* upon all *four*, and dabble in the *Dirt*. Thus the noble Writer’s Ridicule would sweep away the whole System of Education along with the religious Principle: Not an Opinion or Inclination must be controuled, or so much as controverted; “left by this *anticipating Philosophy*, the Work of Reason, and the “inward Exercise of the Mind, at a *riper* “Age, should proceed the more heavily, “and with greater Reluctance.” The Caprice of Infancy must rule us, till the very
Capacity

234 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. X. *Capacity of Improvement should be destroyed; and we must turn Savages, in order to be made perfect in the sovereign Philosophy!*

'Tis no difficult Matter therefore to determine, whether a Child should be left to the Follies of his own *weak* Understanding and *nascent* Passions; be left to imbibe the Maxims of corrupt Times and Manners; Maxims which, setting aside all Regard to their speculative Truth or Falsehood, do lead to certain Misery; or, on the other hand, shall be happily conducted to embrace those religious Principles, which have had the Approbation of the best and wisest Men in every Age and Nation; and which are known and allowed to be the only Means of true Happiness to Individuals, Families, and States.

THIS therefore ought to be the early and principal Care of those who have the Tuition of Youth: And they will soon find the happy Effects of their Instruction. For as the Child's Understanding shall improve, what was at first instilled only as an *Opinion*, will by Degrees be embraced as *Truth*: Reason will then assume her just Empire; and the great, universal, religious Principle,
a rati-

a rational Obedience to the Will of GOD, SECT. X.
will raise him to his utmost Capacity of
moral Perfection; will be a wide and firm
Foundation, on which the whole Fabric of
Virtue may rise in its just Proportions; will
extend and *govern* his *Benevolence* and *moral*
Sense; will strengthen them, if weak; will
confirm them, if strong; will supply their
Want, if naturally defective: In fine, will
direct all his *Passions* to their proper *Objects*
and *Degrees*; and, as the great *Master-spring*
of Action, at once *promote* and *regulate*
every Movement of his *Heart*.

IT must be owned, the noble Writer's
Caution against this "anticipating Philo-
sophy" hath of late been deeply imbibed.
In Consequence of it, we have seen *religious*
Principle declaimed against, ridiculed, la-
mented. The Effect of this hath been, an
abandoned Degree of Villainy in one Class
of Mankind; a lethargic Indifference to-
wards Virtue or Vice in another; and in
the third, which boast the Height of mo-
dern Virtue, we seldom see more than the
first natural Efforts, the mere *Buddings* of
Benevolence and Honour, which are too
generally blasted ere they can ripen in-
to *Action*. This Contempt of Religion
hath

236 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. hath always been a fatal *Omen* to free States.

X.

Nor, if we may credit Experience, can we entertain any just Hope, that this fantastic Scheme, this boasted *Relish* for Beauty and Virtue, can ever give Security to Empire, without the more solid Supports of religious Belief. For it is remarkable, that in the Decline of both the *Greek* and *Roman* States, after Religion had lost its Credit and Efficacy, this very *Taste*, this *sovereign Philosophy* usurped its Place, and became the common Study and Amusement (as it is now among ourselves) both of the *Vile* and *Vulgar*. The Fact, with Regard to *Greece*, is sufficiently notorious; with Regard to *Rome*, it may seem to demand a Proof. And who would think, that *QUINTILIAN* in the following Passage was not describing our own Age and Nation? “Nunc autem quae vel-
“ut propria philosophiae afferuntur, passim
“tractamus omnes: Quis enim modo de
“JUSTO, AEQUO, ac BONO, non et VIR
“PESSIMUS loquitur?”--- *What was formerly the Philosopher’s Province only, is now invaded by all: We find every wicked and worthless Fellow, in these Days, haranguing on VIRTUE, BEAUTY, and GOOD.*” What

° *Quint. Proœmium.*

this

this *Leprosy* of *false* Knowledge may end in, SECT.
X.
I am unwilling to say : But this may be said
with Truth, because it is justified by Expe-
rience ; that along with the Circumstance
now remarked, every other *Symptom* is rising
among us, that hath generally attended the
dark and troubled *Evening* of a *Common-
wealth*.

DOUBTLESS, many will treat these Ap-
prehensions with *Derision* : But this *De-
rision* is far from being an Evidence of their
Falseness. For no People ever fell a Sa-
crifice to themselves, till *lulled* and infatuated
by their own Passions. *Blind Security* is an
essential Characteristic of a People devoted
to Destruction. The Fact is equally un-
deniable, whether it ariseth from the moral
Appointment of Providence, or the Con-
nexion of natural Causes. Though this is
seen and acknowledged by those who are
conversant with the History of Mankind ;
yet 'tis hard to convey this Evidence to those
who seldom extend their Views beyond their
own short Period of Existence ; because they
see the Prevalence of the *Cause* assigned,
while yet the pretended *Consequence* appears
not. But they who look back into ancient
Time are convinced, that the *public* Effects
of

238 *Obligations of Man to VIRTUE.*

SECT. of Irreligion have never been sudden or im-
 X. *mediate.* One Age is *falsely* polite, *irreli-*
gious, and *vile*; the next is sunk in *Servi-*
tude and *Wretchedness*. This is analogous
 to the Operation of other Causes. A Man
 may be intemperate for twenty Years, be-
 fore he feels the Effects of Intemperance on
 his Constitution. The Sun and Moon raise
 the Tides; yet the Tides rise not to their
 Height, till a considerable Time after the
 Conjunction of these two Luminaries. We
 cannot therefore justly decide concerning
 the future *Effects* of Irreligion, from its pre-
 sent State. The *Examples* of former Times
 are a much better *Criterion*: And these are
 such, as ought to make every Man among
 us, that regards Posterity, tremble for his
 Posterity while he reads them.

FOR this is but too just an *Epitome* of the
 Story of Mankind. That TYRANNY and
 SUPERSTITION have ever gone Hand in
 Hand; mutually supporting and supported;
 taking their Progress, and fixing their Do-
 minion over all the Kingdoms of the Earth;
 overwhelming it in one general Deluge, as
 the Waters cover the Sea. Here and there
 a happy Nation *emerges*; breathes for a
 while in the enlightened Region of KNOW-
 LEDGE,

Obligations of Man to VIRTUE. 239

LEDGE, RELIGION, VIRTUE, FREEDOM: SECT.
X.
Till in their appointed Time, IRRELIGION
and LICENTIOUSNESS appear; *mine* the
Foundations of the *Fabric*, and sink it in
the general Abyfs of IGNORANCE and OP-
PRESSION.

POSSIBLY the fatal Blow may yet be
averted from us. 'Tis surely the Duty of
every Man, in every Station, to contribute
his Share, however *inconfiderable*, to this
great End. This must be my Apology for
opposing the noble Writer's fantastic Sy-
stem; which by exhibiting a false Picture
of human Nature, is, in Reality an *Inlet* to
Vice, while it seems most *favourable* to *Vir-
tue*: And while it pretends to be drawn
from the *Depths* of *Philosophy*, is, of all
others, *most unphilosophical*.

SECTION

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ESSAYS

ON THE

Characteristics, etc.

ESSAY III.

On revealed RELIGION, and
CHRISTIANITY.

SECTION I.

IN the Course of the preceding *Essay*, <sup>SECT.
I.</sup> we have seen the noble Writer assuming the Character of the professed *Dogmatist*, the *Reasoner in Form*. In what remains to be considered, concerning *revealed Religion* and CHRISTIANITY, we shall find him chiefly affecting the *miscellaneous* Capacity ;

242 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. city ; the Way of *Chat*, *Raillery*, *Innuendo*, or
 I. *Story-telling* : In a Word, that very Species
 of the present modish Composition, which
 he so contemptuously ridicules ; “ where, as
 “ he tells us, Justness and Accuracy of
 “ Thought are set aside as too constraining ;
 “ where Grounds and Foundations are of
 “ no Moment ; and which hath properly
 “ neither *Top* nor *Bottom*, *Beginning* nor
 “ *End*.” In this, however, his Lordship
 is not quite so much to blame as might be
 imagined. In his Critical Progress, he had
 treated this *diskabille* of Composition, as the
 Man in the Fable did his Pears ; uncon-
 scious he should be ever afterwards reduced
 to diet on them himself. The Truth of
 the Matter is, that the broken Hints, the
 ambiguous Expression, and the Ludicro-
 serious of the gentle Essayist, perfectly
 secure him from the rough Handling of the
 Logical-Disputer.

INDEED the noble Author has a double
 Advantage from this *Cloud*, in which the
Graces so frequently secure their Favourite.
 He not only eludes the Force of every Ar-
 gument the Defenders of Christianity alledge
 in it's Support, but even pleads the Privilege of
 being

* See above, *Essay* i. § 2.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 243

being ranked in the Number of *sincere* Christians. He takes frequent Occasions of expressing his Abhorrence of *idle Scepticks* and *wicked Unbelievers* in Religion: He declares himself of a more resigned Understanding, a ductile Faith, ready to be moulded into any Shape that his spiritual Superiors shall prescribe. At other Times, and in innumerable Places, he scatters such Insinuations against *Christianity*, and that too with all the Bitterness of *Sarcasm* and *Invective*, as must needs be more effectual in promoting *Irreligion*, than a formal and avowed Accusation. For in the Way of open War, there is fair Warning given to put Reason upon Guard, that no pretending Argument be suffered to pass without Examination. On the contrary, the noble Writer's concealed Method of *Raillery*, steals insensibly on his Reader; fills him with endless Prejudice and Suspicion; and, without passing thro' the *Judgment*, fixeth such Impressions on the Imagination, as *Reason*, with all its Effects, will be hardly able afterwards to efface.

THESE inconsistent Circumstances in his Lordship's Conduct, have made it a Question among some, what his real Sentiments were concerning Religion and *Christianity*.

244 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. I. If it be necessary to decide this Question, we may observe, that a disguised Unbeliever may have his Reasons for making a formal Declaration of his Assent to the Religion of his Country: But it will be hard to find what should tempt a real *Christian* to load *Christianity* with Scorn and *Infamy*. Indeed, the noble Writer, to do him Justice, never designed to leave us at a Loss on this Subject. For he hath been so good, frequently to remind his Reader, to *look out* for the true Drift of his *Irony*, lest his real Meaning should be mistaken or disregarded.

HERE then lies the Force of his Lordship's Attack on *Christianity*; "In exciting Contempt by Ridicule." A Method which, as we have already seen^b, tho' devoid of all rational Foundation, is yet most powerful and efficacious in working upon vulgar Minds. Thus the Way of *Irony*, and false Encomium, which he so often employs against the blessed Founder of our Religion, serves him for all Weapons; the deeper he strikes the Wound, the better he shields himself.

WE are not therefore to be surprized, if we find the noble Writer frequently affecting a Mixture of *solemn Phrase* and *low*

^b *Essay* i. *passim*.

Buffoonry;

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 245

Buffoonry; not only in the same *Tract*, but SECT. I.
in the same *Paragraph*. In this Respect, _____
he resembles the facetious Drole I have
somewhere heard of, who wore a *transpa-*
rent Masque: Which, at a Distance, exhi-
bited a Countenance wrap'd up in profound
Solemnity; but those who came nearer,
and could see to the Bottom, found the
native Look distorted into all the ridiculous
Grimace, which Spleen and Vanity could
imprint.

SECTION II.

BUT as *natural* Religion is the only SECT. II.
Foundation of *revealed*; it will be necessary, _____
e'er we proceed to the last, to obviate any
Insinuations which the noble Writer may
have thrown out against the Former.

As to the Expectation of future Happiness
considered, as the natural Consequence of
virtuous Action; his Lordship hath not,
that I know of, either affirmed, or insinuated
any thing against it's Reasonableness. But
with Regard to the other Branch of Reli-
gion, "the Belief of a future State of Misery
" or Punishment, considered as the ap-
" pointed Consequence of Vice", this he

246 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. II. hath frequently endeavoured to discredit in such a Manner, as would be no small Degree of Guilt to transcribe, were it not to shew at once the Impiety and Falsehood of his Affirmations.

IN his Letter on *Enthusiasm*, he hath obliged us with several Passages of this Kind. These, it must be owned, are so obscure, that we must be content, to refer them rather to the Reader's equitable Construction, than urge them as direct Proofs.

THE Apprehension and *Fear* of something *supernatural*, so universal among Mankind, he seems all along to deride, as a visionary and *groundless Pannic*. He adds that, "while some Sects, such as the *Pythagorean* and latter *Platonick*, joined in " with the Superstition and *Ethufiasm* of " the Times; the *Epicurean*, the *Academic* " and others, were allowed to use all the " Force of Wit and Raillery against it^d." To convince us how much he approves the Conduct of these libertine Sects, he boldly follows their Example. He assures us that " such is the Nature of the liberal, polished and refin'd Part of Mankind; so " far are they from the mere Simplicity of

^c *Let, on Enthuf. passim.*

^d *Ib.*

" *Babes*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 247

“ Babes and Sucklings ; that, instead of SECT.
“ applying the Notion of a future Reward II.
“ or Punishment, to their immediate Be-
“ haviour in Society ; they are apt much
“ rather, thro’ the whole Course of their
“ Lives, to shew evidently, that they look
“ on the pious Narrations to be indeed no
“ better than Children’s Tales, and the
“ Amusement of the mere Vulgarⁱ.” He
confirms these Opinions by assigning the
Reason why Men of Sense should stand
clear of the Fears of a Futurity : “ God
“ is so good, as to exceed the very best of us
“ in Goodness : And after this Manner we
“ can have no Dread or Suspicion to render
“ us uneasy ; for it is Malice only, and not
“ Goodness, which can make us afraid^k.”

Is this the *Philosopher* and *Patriot*, the
Lover of his Country and Mankind ! This
the Admirer of ancient Wisdom, of venera-
ble Sages, who founded “ Laws, Constitu-
“ tions, civil and religious Rites, whatever
“ civilizes or polishes Mankind^l.”

*Tu Pater et Rerum inventor ! Tu patria nobis
Suppeditas praecepta !*

THIS, sure, is unhinging Society to the

ⁱ *Misc.* iii. c. 2. ^k *Let. on Enthuf.* ^l *Moralists*, P. i. § 3.

248 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. II. utmost of his Power : For the Force of *religious Sanctions* depends as much on their being believed, as the Force of *human Laws* depends on their being executed. To *destroy* the *Belief* of the *one* therefore, is equivalent to suspending the *other*.

BUT as the present Debate concerns not the *Utility*, but the *Truth* of *Religion*; 'tis chiefly incumbent on us, to shew, that the noble Writer's *Opinion* and *Reasoning*, on this Subject, are void of all Foundation.

'Tis observable therefore, First, that his Lordship, in other Places, allows that " If
" there be naturally such a Passion as Enthu-
" siasm, 'tis evident, that Religion itself is of
" the Kind, and must be therefore natural to
" Man^m." And in his *Letter on Entbusiasm*, even while he derides the Proneness of Mankind to the *conscientious Fear*, he adds, " that tho' Epicurus thought these Appre-
" henfions were *vain*, yet he was forced to
" allow them in a Manner *innate* : " —
" From which Concession, a *Divine*, me-
" thinks, might raise a *good Argument*
" against him, for the *Truth* as well as
" *Usefulness* of Religion." Now as some may possibly be at a Loss to determine here,

^m *Misc.* ii. c. 1.

whether

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 249

whether the noble Writer be in *Jest* or SECT.
Earnest, the Argument he hints at is plainly II.
this: That if we look round the Works of
Nature, we shall find an Analogy establish-
ed, which seems a Proof, that this natural
Fear which *presseth* so universally on the
human Mind, hath a real and proportioned
Object. The Argument hath been urged
by many of great Name, in Favour of the
Hope of future *Good*; and 'tis surely of
equal Force, whatever that Force may be,
when apply'd to the *Fear* of future *Ill*.
For we see thro' the whole Creation, every
Animal of whatever Species, directed by it's
Nature or the Hand of Providence, to fear
and shun it's proper and appointed Enemy.
We find these Apprehensions universally
suited to the Nature and Preservation of
every Species among Birds, Beasts, Fishes,
Insects. Nor is there one *Fear*, tho' some-
times *excessive* in it's *Degree*, that is *erroneous*
with Regard to it's *Object*. The *religious*
Fear, therefore, which *forceth itself* so uni-
versally on the human Mind, in every Age
and Nation, ignorant or knowing, civilized
or barbarous; hath *probably* an Object suited
to it's Nature, ordained for the Welfare of
the human Species. At least, this Argu-
ment

250 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. II. ment must ever be of Weight with those, who draw their Ideas of future Existence from the *Instincts, Hopes, and Expectations* of the human Mind.

INDEED, on the noble Writer's refined Scheme of Morals, in which the natural Affections of the Mind are represented, as all-sufficient for the Purposes of human Happiness, this Argument must lose it's Force ; because, on this Supposition, the religious Fear is *supernumerary* and *useless* : But then this shews the Supposition itself to be *monstrous, absurd*, and contrary to the established Course of Nature ; because Nature gives no Power or Passion, but to some proper and appointed End : The very *Existence* of the Passion, therefore, is a Proof of it's Necessity.

Now, if indeed the religious Fear be *necessary*, as, we presume, hath been sufficiently proved in the preceding Essay ; then, from hence will arise a strong and convincing Proof, that the Object of religious Fear is *real*. For we find thro' the whole Extent of created Being, that the Author of Nature hath annexed to all his Designs and Purposes, the proper Means or Objects, by which they may be fulfilled.

As

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 251

As therefore the religious Fear is not only SECT.
II.
interwoven with the Frame of Man, but
absolutely necessary to his *Happiness*, it's Ob-
ject must be *real*; because, if *not*, you sup-
pose the Creator to have given a NECESSA-
RY *Passion*, without it's *proper* and *appointed*
Object; which would be a Contradiction to
the *universal* and *known Constitution* of
Things.

ON this Occasion, we may observe the
Weakness of the *Epicurean* System, concern-
ing *Providence*: For that Sect hath ever
deny'd, that the Deity concerns himself
with the *moral* Conduct of Man. But from
the wise and benevolent Constitution of the
natural World itself, a strong Proof ariseth
in Support of God's *moral* Government of
it, and of the Truth of the *Fears* and *Ex-
pectations* of the human Mind. For if we
allow that he regards and preserves the
natural Order and Symmetry of the Crea-
tion; that he hath formed this immense
System of Being, and secured it's Continu-
ance and Welfare, by certain Laws, neces-
sary to the Happiness of his Creatures; then
we must on the same Foundation conclude,
that he hath likewise established such *Mo-
tives* and *Laws of Action*, as may determine

252 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. II. *Man* to prosecute the same End. It were an Imputation on the Wisdom of the Deity, to conceive him as *doing* the one, and *omitting* the other : Unless *Mind* and *Morals* be less worthy of his Regard, than *Matter* and *Motion*.

BUT still the noble Writer proceeds in the Spirit of Derision, to expose the Absurdities and Mischiefs this misguided religious Principle hath occasioned ; he often expatiates on the *superstitious Horrors*, and *furious Zeal* which have had their Source in this *Principle* ; and thence, in the Way of Insinuation, concludes it *irrational* and *groundless*.

THE Facts, it must be owned, are notorious and undeniable : But the Consequence is no less evidently chimerical and vain. LORD SHAFTESBURY himself hath observed, that in Failure of a *just Prince* or *Magistrate*, Mankind are ready to submit themselves even to a *Tyrant* : “ Like
“ new-born Creatures, who have never
“ seen their *Dam*, they will fancy one for
“ themselves, and apply (as by Nature
“ prompted) to some like Form for Favour
“ and Protection. In the Room of a *true*
“ *Foster-Father* and *Chief*, they will take
“ after

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 253

“ after a *false one* ; and in the Room of a SECT.
“ legal Government and just Prince, obey II.

“ even a Tyrant ⁿ.” And hence he draws
a strong Proof of the Force of the *social* or
herding Principle, even from *despotic* Power
itself. Again he hath remarked, that
“ *Heroism* and *Philanthropy* are almost one
“ and the same ; yet by a small Misguidance
“ of the Affection, a Lover of Mankind
“ becomes a Ravager ; a Hero and Deli-
“ verer becomes an Oppressor and Destroy-
“ er^o.” ’Tis the same in Religion. Where
the human Mind (ever restless in it’s Search
for the great Center of created Being, on
which alone it can perfectly repose itself)
seeks, but cannot find the *true* GOD, it
naturally sets up a *false one* in his Place :
Here too, Mankind, “ like new-born
“ Creatures, who have never seen their *Dam*,
“ will fancy one for themselves, and apply
“ (as by Nature prompted) to some like
“ Form for Favour and Protection. In the
“ Room of a *true Foster-Father*, they will
“ take after a *false one* ; and in the Room
“ of an *all-perfect* GOD, worship even an
“ *Idol*.” The religious Principle, thus
misguided, breaks forth indeed, into Enor-

ⁿ *Wit. and H. P.* iii. § 1. ^o *Ib.* § 2.

mities

254 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. mities the most pernicious and destructive :

II

Hence indeed, “ by a small Misguidance of
“ the Affection, a *Lover of Mankind* be-
“ comes a *Ravager* ; a *Saint*, an *Oppressor*
“ and *Destroyer*.” But as from the Abuse
of the *social* Principle, so here, in that of
the *religious* one, no other Consequence can
be justly drawn, but that it is *natural* and
strong.

BUT further, the noble Writer finds the
Notion of future Punishment, *inconsistent*
with his Idea of *divine Goodness*. Therefore,
says he, “ We can have no Dread or Sus-
“ picion to make us uneasy : For it is
“ *Malice only*, and not *Goodness*, which can
“ make us afraid ⁹.”

YET, on another Occasion, his Lordship
can affirm, and justly, that, “ a Man of *Tem-*
“ *per* may resist or *punish without Anger*.”
And if so, why may not *divine Goodness*
make us *afraid* ? For as *divine Goodness*
regards the greatest Happiness of all it's
Creatures ; so, if Punishment be *necessary*
to that End, *divine Goodness* will *therefore*
ORDAIN PUNISHMENT. To this Purpose,
a Writer of distinguished Rank and Pene-
tration : “ In Reality, Goodness is the natu-

⁹ *Eng. B. ii. Part ii. § 2.*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 255

“ ral and just Object of Fear to an ill Man. SECT. II.

“ Malice may be appeased or satiated: _____

“ Humour may change: But Goodness is
“ as a fixed, steady immoveable Principle
“ of Action. If either of the Former holds
“ the Sword of Justice, there is plainly
“ Ground for the greatest of Crimes to hope
“ for Impunity. But if it be Goodness,
“ there can be no possible Hope, whilst
“ the Reasons of things, or the Ends of
“ Government call for Punishment. Thus
“ every one sees how much greater Chance
“ of Impunity an ill Man has, in a partial
“ Administration, than in a just and up-
“ right one. It is said, that the Interest or
“ Good of the Whole, must be the Interest
“ of the universal Being; and that he can
“ have no other. Be it so. This Author
“ (Ld. S.) has proved that Vice is naturally
“ the Misery of Mankind in this World:
“ Consequently it was for the Good of the
“ Whole, that it should be so. What
“ Shadow of Reason then is there to assert,
“ that this may not be the Case hereafter?
“ Danger of future Punishment (and if
“ there be Danger, there is Ground of Fear)
“ no more supposes Malice, than the pre-
“ sent Feeling of Punishment does.”

† *Dr. Butler's Sermons, Preface, p. 21.*

THUS

256 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
II. THUS the noble Writer's Derision and Argumentation are equally chimerical and impious ; as it appears, that the natural Fears and Expectations of the human Mind are at least founded in Probability.

S E C T I O N III.

SECT.
III. HIS Lordship's Opinions being so little favourable to *natural Religion*, we cannot wonder, if we find him, on every possible Occasion, throwing out Insinuations and virulent Remarks, in Order to disgrace *revealed*. The First that will deserve our Notice, are such as tend to invalidate the *Credibility of Scripture History*.

HE tells us, " He who says he believes
" *for certain*, or is *assured* of what he be-
" lieves, either speaks *ridiculously*, or says in
" Effect, he believes strongly, but *is not* sure:
" So that whoever is not conscious of Reve-
" lation, nor has certain Knowledge of any
" Miracle or Sign, can be no more than *scep-*
" *tick in the Case* : And the best Christian in
" the World, who being destitute of the Means
" of Certainty, depends only on History and
" Tradition for his Belief of these particu-
" lars, is at best but a *sceptick Christian*."

° *Misc. ii. c. 2.*

Now

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 257

Now it should seem, that the Dexterity of SECT. III.
this Passage lies in a new Application of
two or three Words. For, by "*certain* and
"*assured*" he means *more*, by "*Scepticism*"
he means much *less*, than it is ever used to
signify. And thus (as in Dr. *Mandeville's*
Philosophy already [†] criticized) wherever
we have not *Demonstration*, 'tis plain we
must needs be *Sceptics*.

BUT if indeed we must be *Sceptics* in
revealed Religion, on this Account; the
same Consequence will follow, with Regard
to every other Kind of Knowledge that de-
pends on *human Testimony*. We must be *Scep-*
tics too, in our Belief of every *past* Tran-
saction; nay of every thing transacted in our
own Times, except only of what falls with-
in the narrow Circle of our proper *Obser-*
vation. The Manners of *Men*, the Site of
Countries, the Varieties of *Nature*, the Truths
of Philosophy, the very Food we eat, and
Liquids we drink, are all received on the
sole Evidence of human Testimony. But
what Name would he merit among Men,
who in these Instances should say, "he does
"not believe for certain, or is not assured
"of what he believes", till in every Case he

[†] See above, *Essay* ii.

S

should

258 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. III. should be impelled by the Force of *Demonstration*, or the Evidence of *Sense*?

AND indeed, on other Occasions, where *Christianity* is not concerned, the noble Writer can speak in a very different, and much juster Manner. For thus he appeals to Nature, in *Proof* of the Wisdom and Goodness of the Creator. "Thus too, in
 " the System of the *bigger* World. See there
 " the mutual Dependency of things : The
 " Relation of one to another ; of the Sun to
 " this inhabited Earth ; and of the *Earth*
 " and *other Planets* to the *Sun* ! The *Order*,
 " *Union*, and *Coherence* of the *whole* ! And
 " know, my ingenious Friend, that by this
 " *Survey* you will be obliged to own the
 " *universal System*, and *coherent Scheme* of
 " things ; to be *established on* ABUNDANT
 " PROOF, capable of *convincing* any fair
 " and just Contemplator of the Works of
 " Nature." His Lordship's Argument is
 surely just. Yet, is there one to be found
 among five Hundred of those, who are thus
convinced of the wise Structure of the Uni-
 verse, who have ever taken a *Survey* of this
 immense System, except only in the *Books*
 and *Diagrams* of *experienced Philosophers* ?

▪ *Moralists*, P. ii. § 4.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 259

How few are capable even of comprehend- S E C T.
III.
ing the *Demonstrations*, on which the Truth
of the *Copernican* System is established ; or
receiving, on any other Proof than that of
human Testimony, “ the Relation of the *Earth*
“ and other *Planets* to the *Sun*, the *Order*,
“ *Union*, and *Coherence* of the *whole* ?” It
cannot be supposed, that even the noble
writer himself ever went thro’ the tedious
Process of *Experiment* and *Calculation*, which
alone can give absolute *Certainty* in this ex-
tensive Subject. Yet we find, he is not in
any Degree, “ sceptical in the Case ;” but
very rationally determines, that the Wisdom
of the Deity in “ this universal System,
“ is established on abundant Proof, capable
“ of convincing any fair and just Contem-
“ plator of the Works of Nature.”

It appears then, that a Confidence in the
Veracity of others is not peculiar to the
Belief of *revealed Religion* : The same takes
Place in almost every Subject. More par-
ticularly, we see, that in the *History of Na-*
ture, as in that of *Revelation*, the Evidence
of human *Testimony* is the only Sort of
Proof that can be given to Mankind : And
whoever allows this Proof, as being “ *abun-*
“ *dant and convincing*” in the *one*, and dis-

260 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. allows or despiseth it in the *other*, how self
 III. satisfied soever he may be in his own *Imagi-*
nation, is neither a *fair* nor a *just* Contem-
 plator of the Works and the Ways of *Pro-*
vidence.

IF therefore any Objection lies against the Credibility of the *Scripture History*, it must consist in maintaining, not “that human Testimony is insufficient to support it,” but “that in Fact, it is not sufficiently supported by the Evidence of human Testimony.” If so; this Defect must arise, either from a Want of *External Evidence*: Or Secondly, because the Facts, Doctrines, and Composition of the Bible, are such, that no Testimony whatever can convince us that it is a *divine Revelation*.

WITH REGARD to the first of these, “the Testimony on which the Authenticity of the Gospel History is founded:” This the noble Writer hath attacked by a long Chain of Insinuations, in his last *Miscellany*^w. Where, in the Way of *Dialogue*, he hath indeed amply repaid the Treatment, which in the preceding Chapter he charges upon the *Clergy*. For here he hath introduced two of that *Order*, who, to use his own Ex-

^w *Misc.* v. c. 3.

pression,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 261

“ preffion, are indeed his very legitimate and SECT. III.
“ obsequious *Puppets*, who cooperate in the
“ most officious Manner with the Author,
“ towards the Display of his own proper
“ Wit, and the Establishment of his
“ private Opinion and Maxims^x.” “ Where
“ after the poor Phantom or Shadow of an
“ Adversary, has said as little for his Cause
“ as can be imagined, and given as many
“ Opens and Advantages as could be de-
“ fired, he lies down for good and all ; and
“ passively submits to the killing Strokes of
“ his unmerciful Conqueror^y.”

To these Gentlemen the noble Writer assigns the *herculean* Labour, of proving the Necessity of an absolute *Uniformity* in Opinion. *A hopeful Project indeed !* as his Lordship calls it elsewhere. No Wonder he comes off *Conqueror*, in such a Debate. But here lies the Peculiarity of his Conduct : That while he pretends only to prove, that the Scripture cannot be a Foundation for Uniformity of Opinion *in all things*; he hath thrown out such Insinuations, as evidently imply, that there can be no Foundation for believing the Truth of *anything* the Gospel History contains. He says, he

^x Ib. c. 2.

^y Ib.

262 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. III. began by desiring them “ to explain the
 “ Word *Scripture*, and by enquiring into
 “ the Original of this Collection of antient-
 “ er and later Tracts, which in general
 “ they comprehended under that Title:
 “ whether it were the *apocryphal* Scripture,
 “ or the more *canonical*? the *full* or *half-*
 “ *authorized*? the *doubtful* or the *certain*?
 “ the *controverted* or *uncontroverted*? the
 “ *singly* read, or that of *various* Reading?
 “ the Texts of *these* Manuscripts or of
 “ *those*? the Transcripts, Copies, Titles,
 “ Catalogues, of *this* Church and Nation,
 “ or of *that other*? of this Sect and Party,
 “ or of another? of those in one Age called
 “ Orthodox, and in Possession of Power, or
 “ of those who, in another, overthrew their
 “ Predecessor’s Authority; and, in their
 “ Turn also, assumed the Guardianship and
 “ Power of holy things? For how these
 “ sacred Records were guarded in those
 “ Ages, might easily (he said) be *imagined*,
 “ by any one who had the least insight
 “ into the History of those Times, which
 “ we called *Primitive*, and those Charac-
 “ ters of Men, whom we styled Fathers of
 “ the Church.”

* *Misc. v. c. 3.*

HERE,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 263

HERE, as his Lordship drags us into the *beaten Track of Controversy*, the best Com-
pliment that can be paid the Reader, is to
carry him thro' it by the shortest Way. The
stale Objections here raked together by the
noble Author have been so often, and so
fully refuted, by a Variety of excellent
Writers, that, to many, it may seem a
needless Task, even to touch upon the
Subject^a.

SECT.
III.

HOWEVER, for the Satisfaction of those
who may think it necessary, a summary
View of the Evidence is here subjoined,

THE Authenticity, therefore, of the
Books of the *new Testament*, appears to be
founded on the strongest moral Evidence,
because from the earliest Ages, we find them
ascribed to the Apostles and Evangelists,
whose Names they bear. Thus St PAUL's
Epistles are mentioned by St. PETER, and
cited by CLEMENS ROMANUS, who lived in
the Reign of CLAUDIUS, even before St
PAUL was carried Prisoner to ROME. PO-
LYCARP and IRENÆUS were for some Time
contemporary with St. JOHN: They both cite

^a *Du Pin, Le Clerc, Tillemont, Whitby, Lardner, Phil. Lipsiensis, &c.* and very lately Mr. Fortin, in his learned Remarks on *Ecclesiastical History*.

264 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. III. the four Gospels, and affirm they were all wrote by the Apostles and Evangelists, whose Names they bear. JUSTIN MARTYR and CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS, confirm their Accounts in the following Century : And the great ORIGEN, with whom I shall close the Catalogue, and who lived in the Reign of SEVERUS, in his Book against CELSUS hath cited *all* the *Gospels*, and *most*, if not *all* the *Epistles*, under the Names they now bear : And the Words of the several Citations perfectly agree with those of the new Testament, now in Use. Such a full Proof of the Genuineness of these sacred Records, as is not to be parallel'd, concerning any other Book, of *equal* or even of much *less Antiquity*.

The *internal* Proof of their Genuineness, arising from their *Style* and *Composition*, is no less eminent and particular. The Genius of every Book, is so perfectly agreeable to the Character and Education of it's respective Author ; every Custom described or alluded to, either *Jewish*, *Greek*, or *Roman*, so entirely suited to the *Times* ; every Incident so *natural*, so *occasional*, so *particular*, so perfectly *identify'd*, that it were the very
extreme

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 263

extreme of Ignorance and Folly, to raise a SECT.
III.
Doubt on this Subject.

THAT the Gospel-History hath been transmitted to us, *pure* and *uncorrupted*, we have no less Reason to believe. 'Tis well known how zealous the primitive Christians were in the Preservation of the Scriptures: We know, they regarded them as their chief and dearest Treasure; and often laid down their Lives, rather than deliver the sacred Records to their Enemies, who used every Art of Terror, to seize and destroy them. Again, the Scriptures were not then locked up from the Laity, as now in the *Roman Church*: But Copies were taken, dispersed, and became immensely numerous. They were universally read at the Times of public Worship, in different Nations of the World. To this we may add, that as *now*, so *then*, different Sects and Parties subsisted, who all appealed to Scripture for Proof of their several Opinions; and these, 'tis evident, must have been so many *Checks* upon each other, to the general Exclusion of Mistake and Fraud^h.

^h The JEWS and SAMARITANS were *Checks* upon each other in the same Manner, for the Preservation of the Purity of the *Pentateuch*. The *Samaritan Pentateuch*.

266 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
III.

THIS being the real State of the Case ; let us now consider the noble Writer's Questions. He asks, whether by Scripture be understood " the apocryphal or more canonical ? " the full or half-authorized ? the doubtful " or the certain ? the controverted or un- " controverted ? " These Questions are nearly synonymous, and one short Reply will clear them all. There are many Books, concerning which there never was *any Doubt*. There are some, concerning which the Doubts have been fully *cleared up*. There are others, concerning which the Doubts have been *confirmed*. Of the first Kind are *all* the *Gospels*, and *most* of the *Epistles* : Of the second, are the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the *second* of *Peter*, *second* and *third* of *John*, that of *Jude*, and the *Apocalypse* : Of the third Kind, are the *apocryphal* Books ; therefore indeed so called.

THE noble Author goes on. " The *single* read, or that of *various* Reading ? "

touch was printed in the last Century : And, " after " *Two thousand Years* Discord between the Two Na- " tions, varies as little from the other, as any *Classic* " Author in less Tract of Time has disagreed from it- " self, by the *unavoidable Mistakes* of so many *Tran-* " *scribers*." See *Phil. Lipsiens*.

My

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 267

My Lord, if by *single read* you mean a Book SECT.
III.
in which there are no various Readings, there are none *single read*: Nor, probably, was there ever any Book *single read*, that went thro' more than one Edition: at least, before the Invention of *Printing*. And as the Scriptures were oftener transcribed than any other Book, so, a greater Variety of of Readings must naturally take Place. But I must inform your Lordship, from the learned PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS, that this is the most illiterate of all Cavils: For that in Fact, we have the *Sense* of those ancient Authors most *entire*, where the various Readings are most numerous: As, of those Authors where the Varieties are *fewest*, the *Sense* is most mutilated or obscureⁱ. But if by *single read*, your Lordship means an authentic Text collected and composed out of the various Readings, I beg leave to inform you, there is no such in the Protestant Churches. They have been too modest to attempt any such Thing. Nor does the *Truth* suffer by it: For as the learned Critic, just before quoted, observes, the most faulty Copy of the new Testament now in

ⁱ For a full View of this Argument, See *Phil. Lipsiens.*

being,

268 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. III. being, does not obscure one moral Doctrine or one Article of Faith.

AGAIN the noble Writer goes on, in a Profusion of synonymous Terms: "The
" Transcripts, Copies, Titles, Catalogues,
" of this Church or that? of this Sect or
" Party, or another? of those in one Age
" called orthodox, or those who in another
" Age overthrew them?" What unexperienced Person would not imagine from hence, that *different* Churches, Sects, or Parties, had *each* of them a Bible different from the rest? Yet 'tis certain, that however these Parties differed in Opinions, we find from their Writings now subsisting, that they all appealed to one common Scripture for their Support.

THE noble Writer takes his Leave by paying a Compliment to these primitive Writers called the Fathers of the Church. "How these sacred Records were *guarded*
" in those Ages, might be easily *imagined*," &c. — But to *imagine*, is a much easier Task than to *prove*; especially when Imagination is helped forward by Inclination. *Guarded* indeed they were, as we have seen, from Interpolation and Falshood. But if he means to insinuate, that they were *guard-
ed*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 269

ed from *Inspection* and *Criticism*, he does great Injustice to Christianity. For what-
ever Marks of secular Views may be discovered in the Conduct of the ancient Christians in the succeeding Ages, we may safely bid Defiance to the noble Writer's Admirers, to shew any thing of this Kind in the Characters of those to whose Testimony we have here appealed; and on whose Testimony, joined to that of their numerous and ingenuous Contemporaries, the Authenticity of the Gospel-History depends. They were far from acting or writing with a View to temporal Advantage; they were struggling under the Weight of heavy Persecutions; had no Motives to preach or write, but the great Expectation of Happiness hereafter, founded on a firm Belief of that holy Religion, which they propagated with an Effect *almost*, if not *indeed*, *miraculous*.

ON this Occasion I cannot but observe a strange Insinuation thrown out elsewhere by the noble Writer; which, however, is so glaring a Falshood, that he finds himself obliged to disavow it, even while he labours to impress it on his Reader's Imagination, in all the Colours of Eloquence. " If,
" saies

SECT.
III.

270 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. III. "saies he, the collateral Testimony of other
 "ancient Records were destroyed, there
 "would be less Argument or Plea remain-
 "ing against that natural Suspicion of those
 "who are called Sceptical, that the holy
 "Records themselves were no other than
 "the pure Invention or artificial Compile-
 "ment of an interested Party, in Behalf of
 "the *richest Corporation*, and most *profita-
 "ble Monopoly* in the World^k." Now if
 his Lordship be indeed in earnest in urging
 this Insinuation, he must believe, that *one*
Set of Men *preached*, and *wrote*, and en-
 dured *Bonds* and *Imprisonment*, *Torments*
 and *Death*; to the End that *another Set* of
 Men, some *three* or *four Hundred Years*
 after, might enjoy the *rich Corporations* and
profitable Monopoly of *Church Preferments*.
 How far this may be a Proof of the noble
 Writer's *Sagacity*, I shall leave others to de-
 termine. But if he *believes not* the Insinu-
 ation, as indeed he seems to *disbelieve* it,
 then we cannot surely hesitate a Moment
 concerning the Measure of his *Sincerity*.

THE Gentleman therefore who makes
 so ridiculous a Figure in the supposed Con-

^k *Misc. v. c. 1.*

versation.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 271

versation, had he not been a poor *obsequious* SECT.
III.
Puppet, might have returned one general
and satisfactory Answer to all these extraor-
dinary Questions. He might have desired
his Lordship "to chuse which he should
" like *best* or *worst* among all these contro-
" verted Copies, various Readings, Manu-
" scripts, and Catalogues adopted by what-
" ever Church, Sect, or Party." Nay, he
might have desired him to chuse any of the
almost infinite Number of Translations
made of these Books in distant Countries
and Ages: And taking that to be the Scrip-
ture he appealed to, might safely have re-
lied on it, as amply sufficient for all the
great Purposes of *Religion* and *Christianity*.

S E C T I O N IV.

SINCE therefore the *Scripture History* SECT.
IV.
appears to be supported by *higher Degrees*
of human Testimony, than any other anti-
ent Writing; the only Objections of real
Weight against it, must be drawn from it's
internal Structure: from the Facts it *relates*,
the Doctrines it *inculcates*, or the Form of
it's *Composition*.

THE *Facts* related, being as it were the
Foundation of all, will naturally come first
under

272 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. under Consideration. "Now these, say
IV. "the Enemies of Christianity, are *miracu-*
lous or *out of Nature*, and therefore ab-
 "surd: For *as they can prove nothing*, so it
 "is impossible that Accounts of this Kind
 "could be so essentially mingled with a
 "Religion that should come from God."

ON this Foundation the noble Writer hath taken frequent Occasion to deride what he calls the "Mockery of Miracles¹;" particularly those of our Saviour^m. Here we shall find him striking at the very Basis of all revealed Religion, while he asserts, that, even supposing the Truth of the Facts, "Miracles cannot witness either for God or
 "Men, nor are any Proof either of Divi-
 "nity or Revelationⁿ." But that his Argument may be fairly represented, let it appear in his own Words. "The Con-
 "templation of the Universe, it's Laws
 "and Government, was (I aver'd) the
 "only Means which could establish the
 "sound Belief of a Deity. For what tho'
 "innumerable Miracles from every Part
 "assailed the Sense, and gave the trembling
 "Soul no Respite? What tho' the Sky
 "should suddenly open, and all kinds of
 "Prodigies appear, Voices be heard, or

¹ *Misc.* ii. c. 2.
 Part ii § 5. passim.

^m *Ib.* c. 3.

ⁿ *Moralists*,

"Charac-

On revealed Religion and Christianity. [271]

“ Characters read ? What would this evince ^{SECT.}
 “ more, than that there was certain Powers ^{IV.}
 “ could do all this ? But what Powers ;
 “ whether one or more ; whether superior,
 “ or subaltern ; mortal, or immortal ; wise
 “ or foolish ; just or unjust ; good or bad :
 “ This would still remain a Mystery ; as
 “ would the *true Intention*, the *Infallibility*
 “ or *Certainty* of whatever *these Powers as-*
 “ *serted*°.”

’Tis remarkable, that the noble Writer pretends here only to shew, that Miracles are no Proof of the *Existence* of God : Yet in the Conclusion of his Argument, he brings it home to the Case of *Revelation* : To “ the true *Intention*, the *Infallibility* or “ *Certainty* of whatever *these Powers AS-* “ *SERTED*.” This is clearly the Scope of his Argument : And so indeed hath it been understood by his *Under-workmen* in *Infidelity*, who have with great Industry retailed this Objection. As it is a Circumstance of the last Importance in Regard to the Truth of *Christianity*, it cannot be an unseasonable Task, to shew in the fullest Manner the Vanity and Error of this trite Cavil.

BUT instead, of considering *single Acts* of of supernatural or *miraculous Power*, as be-

° Ib.
 * T ing

[272] *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
IV.

ing performed in Attestation of any *particular Doctrine*, (which hath been the general Way of treating this Question) 'tis my Design to consider as one Object, " that vast *Series* " and *Concatenation* of miraculous Acts, " recorded in the Old and New Testament, " wrought thro' a long Succession of Ages, " for the *carrying on, Support, and Completion* of the *Christian Dispensation*.

WITH this View therefore let us first consider the means by which Mankind are justly convinced of the *Being* of a *God*. Now this Conviction, 'tis allowed by all, ariseth from a *Union* of *Power, Wisdom, and Goodness*, displayed in the visible Creation. From this *Union* alone arises the Idea of an *all-perfect Being*: so that a Failure in any of these three essential Circumstances would *destroy* the Idea of a *God*. The *Goodness* of the Deity is seen in the designed End or Purpose of the Creation, which is, " The Happiness of all " his Creatures:" His *Wisdom* is seen, in the proper Means employed for the Accomplishment of this great End: His *Power* fulfills what *Goodness* had intended and *Wisdom* contrived, by putting these Means in Execution. Hence then alone we obtain the Idea of a *Divinity*, from a *Union* of perfect *Goodness, Wisdom, and Power*.

THE

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 273

'Tis likewise, I think, acknowledged by SECT.
IV.
all *Theists*, that, as to the divine Power, it
may work it's Intentions, either by a con-
tinued and uninterrupted Superintendency,
or Agency on Matter, or by impressing
certain original and permanent Qualities
upon it. Which of these two Kinds of
Operation may really prevail in Nature, is
perhaps beyond the Reach of human Know-
ledge, clearly to determine. The *Newto-
nian* Philosophy indeed renders it highly
probable, that the *continued Agency* of God
prevails. But a Determination in this Sub-
ject is indeed of no Consequence; since,
which soever of these Methods be ordained,
the *divine Power* is equally display'd, while
it ministers to the Ends of *Goodness* and
Wisdom.

'Tis equally plain, that, if the divine
Goodness should determine to raise Man-
kind to *higher Degrees* of *Knowledge* and
Virtue, than what they could attain to by
the pre-established Laws of Nature; or
to free them from *Defects* and *Miseries*,
occasioned by any incidental and *voluntary*
Corruptions, *posterior* to their *Creation*; 'tis
equally plain, I say, that an Exertion of
supernatural Power for the Accomplishment

T of

274 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. of *this End*, would be a *Display, Proof, or*
IV. *Revelation* of the *Divinity*, entirely similar
to that which arises from the Works of
Nature. For both *here*, and in the Works
of *Nature*, the Proof of the Divinity ariseth,
not from mere uniform Acts of Power, but
from the *Subserviency* of divine *Power*
to this one great End, the *Production* of
human *Happiness*. Here then, the noble
Writer's Objection is essentially defective :
What he affirms is either *false*, or *foreign* to
the Question. For if we suppose (and the
present Question is put upon this Footing
only) that the miraculous or supernatural
Effects are evidently subservient to similar
Ends of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, as appear in
the Works of the Creation ; then sure, we
have equal Reason to conclude, and be
convinced, that they are the Effects of *one*
Power ; — of one *superior* and *immortal*
Power ; — of one Power, *wise, just, and*
good ; — In a Word, of that Power which
first brought Nature into Being, established
Laws for the Welfare of his Creatures ;
and when the Happiness of his Creatures
requires an Interposition, gives still further
Evidences of his *Goodness, Wisdom, and Om-*
nipotence,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 275

nipotence, by controuling those Laws which SECT.
IV. himself had established.

LET us now apply these Principles to the *Christian* Dispensation. “ This, we
“ say, was a Scheme of Providence, which
“ still continues operating ; whereby the
“ Deity determined to raise fallen and cor-
“ rupted Man to higher Degrees of *Know-*
“ *ledge, Virtue, and Happiness*, than what
“ by Nature he could have attained.” In
this Design, the *divine* GOODNESS is emi-
nently display’d.

THE Means, whereby this great Design
was accomplished, was “ by separating a
“ peculiar People from the rest of Man-
“ kind ; not for their own Sakes, but for
“ the Sake of all ; by preserving them
“ amidst their Enemies ; by leading them
“ forth into a distant Country ; by establish-
“ there the Worship of the *one* God, in
“ Opposition to the Idolatries of surround-
“ ing Nations : ’Till, when the Fulness of
“ Time should come, and Mankind be ca-
“ pable of receiving a more perfect Reve-
“ lation, a Saviour JESUS CHRIST should be
“ sent, to free Mankind from the Power of
“ Ignorance and Sin ; to bring Life and Im-
“ mortality to Light, and communicate to

276 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. "all Men the most perfect practical Know-
 IV. ledge of the true God, and of every moral
 "Duty." In this Dispensation is no less
 eminently displayed the *divine WISDOM*.

BUT what less than Omnipotence itself
 could secure the perfect Execution of a Plan
 so *mighty* and *extensive*? Which reaching
 thro' the Compass of many, and distant
 Ages, must combat the *Power*, controul
 the *Prejudices*, and work it's Way thro' the
discordant Manners and *Opinions* of all the
 Kingdoms of the Earth. On this Account
 the immediate Exertion of divine Power
 was necessary for it's *Proof*, *Support*, and
Completion. Accordingly, we find it's om-
 nipotent Author, carrying on this Scheme of
Wisdom and *Goodness*, with a *mighty Hand*,
 and an *out-stretched Arm*. "He sent a
 "Man before his People, even JOSEPH,
 "who was sold to be a Bond-Servant: He
 "increased his People exceedingly, and
 "made them stronger than their Enemies.
 "He sent MOSES his Servant, and AARON:
 "And these shewed his *Tokens* among them;
 "and *Wonders* in the Land of *Ham*. He
 "sent Darkness, and it was dark; and turned
 "their Waters into Blood. Their Land
 "brought forth Frogs, yea, even in their
 "King's

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 277

“ King’s Chambers. He gave them Hail- SECT.
IV.
“ stones for Rain, and Flames of Fire in
“ their Land. He spake the Word, and
“ the Locusts came innumerable, and de-
“ voured the Fruit of their Ground. He
“ smote all the first-born in their Land,
“ even the chief of all their Strength. He
“ brought forth his People from among
“ them: He spread out a Cloud to be a
“ Covering, and Fire to give them Light in
“ the Night-Season. He rebuked the *Red-*
“ *Sea* also, and it was dried up; so he led
“ them thro’ the Deep as thro’ a Wilder-
“ ness. At their Desire he brought Quails,
“ and filled them with the Bread of Heaven.
“ He opened the Rock of Stone, so that
“ Rivers ran in dry Places.—Yet within a
“ while they forgot his Works, and tempt-
“ ed God in the Desert: Then the Earth
“ opened, and swallowed up *Dathan*, and
“ covered the Congregation of *Abiram*.
“ They joined themselves unto *Baal-Peor*,
“ and provoked him with their own Inven-
“ tions; so the Plague was great among
“ them: Then, being chastised, they turn-
“ ed to their God. He led them over *Jor-*
“ *dan*; the Waters divided to let them pass.
“ He discomfited their Enemies: At his
T 3 “ Word,

278 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IV. “ Word the Sun abode in the midst of
 “ Heaven ; and the Moon stood still, and
 “ halted not to go down for a whole Day.
 “ So he gave the Kingdoms of *Canaan* to
 “ be an Heritage unto his People ; that all
 “ the Nations of the World might know
 “ that the Hand of the Lord is mighty,
 “ and that they might fear the Lord con-
 “ tinually.”

Hence then we see, that this mighty Series of miraculous Acts recorded in the *Old Testament*, being the very Means of preserving and separating the ISRAELITES from the rest of Mankind, and at the same time designed to impress them with a lasting Idea of the uncontrollable and immediate Power of God ; were generally awakening Instances of Omnipotence, often of Justice and Terror, in the Punishment of cruel EGYPTIANS, rebellious JEWS, and idolatrous Nations.

In pursuing this vast Concatenation of divine Power thro’ the Series of Miracles recorded in the *New Testament*, and wrought for the same End, the Completion of Christianity, we shall find them of a very different Nature and Complexion : Yet still, admirably suited to accomplish the same designed Ends of Providence. For now the Fulness
 of

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 279

of Time was come, in which the Wisdom of the Deity ordained the immediate Establish-
ment of a Religion of perfect *Purity* and boundless *Love*. Accordingly, the Series of miraculous Acts wrought for this great End, were such as must naturally *engage* Mankind to a *favourable Reception* of *Christianity*; were the very *Image* and Transcript, expressed the very *Genius* of that most *amiable* Religion they were brought to *support* and *establish*; in a Word, were continued Instances of *Omnipotence*, joined with *unbounded Charity*, divine *Compassion* and *Benevolence*.
SECT.
IV.

THE Birth of JESUS was proclaimed by a glorious Apparition of superior Beings, who declared the End of his coming in that divine Song of Triumph, “Glory to God
“ in the highest, and on Earth Peace, Good
“ Will towards Men!” His Life was one continued Scene of divine Power, Wisdom, and Beneficence. He gave Eyes to the Blind; Ears to the Deaf; and Feet to the Lame: He raised the Dead to Life, rebuked the raging Elements, and made the Winds and Seas obey him. When to fulfill the Decrees of Heaven, and complete the great Work of Man’s Redemption, he submitted to an ignominious Death, the

280 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. Vail of the Temple was rent in twain: A
IV. general Darkneſs involved, and an Earth-quake ſhook, the City. The ſame Omnipotence by which he wrought his Miracles, raiſed him from the Grave; and after a ſhort ſtay on Earth, during which he ſtrengthened and confirmed his deſponding Followers, tranſlated him to Heaven. And now, a new and *unexpected* Scene of divine and miraculous Power opened on Mankind, for the full Eſtabliſhment of *Chriſtianity*. The Spirit of God came down, and dwelt with the Apoſtles; they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance. They were inveſted with ſupernatural Power to heal Diſeaſes; were impowered to ſtrike dead the deceitful ANANIAS and SAPPHIRA; and when imprifoned, were delivered by the immediate Hand of GOD. By theſe Means, Chriſtianity gained a numerous Train of Proſelytes among the JEWS; but the great Work of converting the Gentiles was not yet begun. To this End the Apoſtle PAUL was deſtined; and converted to Chriſtianity by an amazing Act of ſupernatural and divine Power. In this important Miniſtry he was frequently preſerved
by

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 281

by the miraculous Care of Providence ; did himself perform stupendous Acts of Power and Beneficence ; by these Means converting Multitudes among the Gentiles, and planting Christianity in the most knowing and polished Nations of the Earth.

SECT.
IV.

To this irresistible Chain of Evidence, arising from the miraculous Exertion of divine Power, we may add another *collateral* Proof, arising from the *miraculous* Emanations of divine *Fore-knowledge*, recorded in the Bible, and delivered in PROPHECY thro' a Series of Ages, all *centering* in the same Point, the foretelling the *Completion* of this immense Plan of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*. These *Predictions* were fulfilled in the Advent, Life, Death, and Resurrection of our *Saviour* ; who himself foretold the Success of his Apostles among the Gentiles, and the final Dissolution of the Jewish Polity. This came to pass in the Destruction of the *Temple* : And when a bitter Enemy to Christianity attempted to make void the Decrees of Heaven in rebuilding this *Temple*, (the only Circumstance of Union that could ever make the JEWS *once more a People*) the very Foundations were rent in Pieces by an Earthquake,

282 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. Earthquake, and the mad Assailants against
IV. *Omnipotence* buried in the Ruins.

FROM this mighty *Union*, therefore, ariseth a Proof similar to that which we obtain from the Works of Nature. For as in *these* we see the Happiness of the Creation *intended, plann'd, and produced*, and from hence discover the Agency of the Deity: So in the Progress and Completion of *Christianity* we find a parallel Display of the divine Attributes: We see the Advancement of Man's Happiness *determined* by divine GOODNESS, *plann'd* by divine WISDOM, *foretold* by divine KNOWLEDGE, *accomplished* by divine POWER: and hence, as in *Nature*, obtain a full *Manifestation, Proof, or Revelation* of the DEITY.

As this seems to be the true Light, in which the Evidence arising from the Scripture-Miracles ought to be placed, it may be proper now to add a few Observations on what hath been offered on this Subject, both by the *Defenders* and the *Adversaries* of *Christianity*.

I. As to the Degree of Proof or Evidence arising from a *single Miracle* in Support of any *particular Doctrine*; whatever Force it may carry, 'tis a Point, which we
are

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 283

are by no Means at present concerned to de- SECT.
IV.
termine: Because, as we have seen, in the
Progress of the Christian Dispensation,
there is a vast *Series* or *Chain*, all *uniting* in
one common End. It might be considered,
in the same Manner, by those who write in
Proof of the Being of a God, “What Evi-
“ dence of his Being would arise from a
“ single *Vegetable* or *Animal*, unconnected
“ with the rest of the Creation.” But how-
ever satisfying a single Fact of this Kind
may be to impartial Minds, it were surely
weak to argue on this Foundation *only*,
while we can appeal to that mighty *Union*
of Design which appears in the Works of
Nature. It should therefore seem, that the
Defenders of Christianity have generally
set this Evidence in too *detached* and *par-*
ticular a Light: For tho’ the Proof arising
from a single Miracle, in Support of a par-
ticular Doctrine may be of sufficient Force
to convince an equitable Mind; yet sure,
’tis infinitely stronger and more satisfactory,
if we *view at once* the whole *Chain* of Mira-
cles, by which the great Scheme of *Christi-*
anity was propagated, as *one* vast *Object*:
Because in this View, we discover innume-
rable Circumstances of *mutual Relation* and
Agreement,

284 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. *Agreement*, fimilar to thofe which are Proofs
IV. of *final Causes* in the natural World : In a
Word, we difcover that *Union of Defign*,
that Concurrence of infinite *Goodnefs, Wif-*
dom, and *Power*, which is the fure Indica-
tion of the *Divinity*.

II. IF in a Difpenfation thus proved to
be from God by all thefe concurring Sig-
natures of Divinity, any *incidental Circum-*
ftances fhould be found, which are *unac-*
countable to *human Reason* ; 'tis the Part of
human Reason to *acquiefce* in this *mysterious*
and *unknown* Part, from what is *clear* and
known. Because in a System or Difpenfa-
tion planned by *infinite Wifdom*, there
muft of Neceffity be fomething which *finite*
Wifdom cannot comprehend. This the
noble Writer allows with Regard to the
Works of Nature. “ If, faith he, in this
“ *mighty Union*, there be fuch Relations of
“ Parts one to another as are not eafily dif-
“ covered ; if on this Account, the *End* and
“ *Ufe* of Things does not every where ap-
“ pear, there is *no Wonder* ; fince 'tis indeed
“ no more than what *muft happen* of
“ *Neceffity*. Nor could fupreme Wifdom
“ have otherwife ordered it. For in an In-
“ finity of things thus relative, *a Mind*
“ *which*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 285

“which sees not infinitely, can see nothing
“fully¹.”

SECT.
VI.

III. HENCE therefore may be evinced the Vanity of this Cavil, “that nothing can be proved to be a divine Revelation which is not discoverable by human Reason; since whatever is reasonable needs no Miracle to confirm it, and whatever is beyond the Reach of Reason cannot be made to appear reasonable by any Miracle whatsoever.” Hence, I say, the Vanity of this Cavil is evident. Because, as in Nature, so in Revelation, the full Evidence of Divinity is founded, not on single detached Circumstances, but on a mighty *Union* or *Concatenation* of Facts, implying the most perfect *Wisdom*, *Power*, and *Goodness*. This Foundation being once laid, if any thing *incidental* in either Case appears unaccountable as to its *End* or *Use*, it is naturally and properly involved, or taken in as a *Part* of this *immense Design*, which thro’ its vast Extent, must needs be *incomprehensible* to *human Reason*.

IV. As to the Objection, “that Miracles may be wrought by inferior or sub-

¹ *Moralists*, P. ii. § 4.
Tindal, *Morgan*, and others.

² An Objection urged by

altern

286 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IV. “ baltern Beings:” This vanishes at once with Regard to the *Christian* Dispensation, on the Evidence as here stated. For as the miraculous Acts of Power recorded in the Bible were wrought for the Support and Accomplishment of a Dispensation full of *Goodness* and *Wisdom*, we have the same Proof that they were the Work of the *supreme God*, as we have, *that Nature is so*. ’Tis true, that in either Case, for aught we know, *inferior* or *subaltern* Beings may have been commissioned by the *Supreme*, as *immediate Agents*. But this Possibility, in either Case, can be a Matter of no Consequence to us, while it is manifest that the *delegated* Beings, whatever they might be, acted in full *Subserviency* to the *Goodness*, *Wisdom*, and *Omnipotence* of the *one eternal God*.

V. To the noble Writer’s Objection, “ that, while we labour to unhinge Nature, “ we bring Confusion on the World, and “ destroy that Order from whence the one “ infinite and perfect Principle is known^h.” — the Reply is easy and convincing. For while the supernatural Power is directed to advance the Happiness of Mankind, ’tis so

^h *Moral*. P. ii. § 5.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 287

far from destroying any Principle from SECT.
whence the one perfect Being is known ; IV.

that, on the contrary, it gives us still clearer and more satisfying Notices of the divine Providence. 'Tis allowed on all Hands, that there are Imperfections in the Creation : And tho' there may be, and doubtless are, good Reasons unknown to us, why these should not in every Instance be removed by a particular Exertion of supernatural Power ; yet when the divine Wisdom sees fit thus to interpose, for the further Advancement of his Creatures' Happiness ; can any thing be more irrational than to say, that " this is bringing Confusion on the " World ?" The only Question is, Whether " *Happiness* shall be destroyed for the sake " of a pre-established *Law* ; or a pre-established *Law* be *suspended* for the sake of " *Happiness* ?" In other Words, whether *Power* shall be subservient to *Goodness*, or *Goodness* yield to *Power* ? A Question which no sound *Theist* can be left at a Loss to answer. As therefore the Exertion of divine Power, *in Nature*, is for the Production of *Happiness* ; the *miraculous* Exertion of Power, for the further *Advancement* of Man's *Happiness*, is so far from " bring-
5 " ing

288 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IV. "ing Confusion on the World, either the
" Chaos and Atoms of the *Atheists*, or the
" Magick and Dæmons of the POLYTHE-
" ISTS," that it is even the clearest *Proof*,
or *Revelation* of the DIVINITY.

VI. WITHOUT this apparent Subservi-
ency to the Designs of Wisdom and Good-
ness, all Accounts of miraculous Facts must
be highly improbable. Because we have
no Reason to believe that the Deity will
ever counteract the established Laws of
Nature; unless for the Sake of advancing
the Happiness of his Creatures.

VII. ON this Account, most of the pre-
tended Miracles recorded in the *Heathen*
Story, are highly *improbable*. For it doth
not appear, they were ever said to have
been wrought in any *Series* or *Chain*: they
never were *directed* to the Accomplishment
of any *one End*, thro' *different Periods* of
Time: Were frequently far from being
beneficent: Seldom accommodated even to
any *rational Purpose*; but generally, mere
pretended Acts of *arbitrary* and *unmeaning*
Power. Thus they are essentially distin-
guished from the Scripture Miracles; and
are utterly destitute of that INTERNAL
Evidence

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 289

Evidence which ariseth from an Union of SECT.
IV.
Design.

VIII. HENCE we may clearly discover the Reason, why the wiser Heathens ridiculed the *Jews*, even to a *Proverb*, for their extravagant Regard to *Miracles*. They knew their own to be *absurd* and *irrational*; this at once prevented them from enquiring into the real Nature of the *Jewish* Miracles; and at the same Time, led them to *deride* and *reject* these boasted *Wonders*, as being no better than their own.

IX. BUT on the Evidence as here stated, the Scripture Miracles become even *probable*, from the Circumstances under which they are recorded. As they are beneficent: As they were wrought thro' *different Periods* of Time in *Support* of one Dispensation full of *Wisdom* and *Goodness*: As it is highly improbable that this Dispensation could have been *completed* in all it's immense *Variety* of *Circumstances* without such an immediate *Interposition* of divine *Power*.

X. AND now we shall plainly see the Reason why we reject the Accounts of Miracles given by Heathen Writers, while we believe the other Parts of their Story; and yet cannot reject the *Jewish* and *Chris-*

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tian

SECT. *tian* Miracles, without rejecting at the same
 IV. Time the whole History in which they are contained. For in the first Case, as the Miracles are *useless, unmeaning, and unconnected* with the rest of the Facts, it appears they are merely political. But the *Jewish* and *Christian* Miracles make an essential Part of the several Events related; they are strongly connected with this great HISTORY of PROVIDENCE, and are indeed *the very Means* by which *Providence* completed it's gracious *Purpose*, "the Establishment of Christianity." We cannot therefore reject these *miraculous* Accounts without rejecting all the *natural Events* with which they are thus intimately *interwoven*: And this we cannot do, without destroying every received Principle of Assent, and shaking the Faith of all ancient History.

I cannot conclude this Argument without transcribing a noble Passage from the Book of *Wisdom*, where several of these Truths are finely illustrated: And which may convince us, how just an Idea the JEWS entertained of *miraculous Interposition*, beyond what their Enemies have industriously represented. The Writer, after recounting the stupendous Chain of Miracles wrought

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 291

wrought for the Deliverence of the chosen SECT.
People, concludes thus. “ In all things, IV._____

“ O Lord, thou hast magnified and glorified thy People, and hast not despised to assist them in every Time and Place.—
“ For every Creature in it's Kind was fashioned a new, and served in their own Offices enjoyned them, that thy Children might be kept without Hurt.—For the things of the Earth were changed into things of the Water, and the thing that did swim went upon the Ground. The Fire had power in the Water, contrary to his own Virtue ; and the Water forgot his own Kind, to quench.— Thus the Elements were *changed* among themselves by a *Kind of Harmony*, as when one *Tune* is *changed* upon an *Instrument* of Music, and the *Melody still remaineth*.

Thus he nobly expresseth the *Subserviency* of the *Elements* to the *divine Will*: And under the Image of a musical Instrument, which the skilful Master *tunes, changes,* and *directs* to the *one Purpose of Harmony*, he aptly and beautifully represents the *whole Creation* as an *Instrument* in the Hands of God, which he *orders, varies,* and con-

292 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. *trouls, to the one unvary'd End of* HAPPY-
IV. NESS.

SECTION V.

HAVING vindicated the Scripture *Miracles* from the noble Writer's Objections; and shewn that they are so far from being *useless* or *absurd*, that the grand Scheme of Providence could neither have been *evidenced* nor *accomplished* without them; we have destroyed the chief Foundation on which his Lordship hath attempted to fix his Cavils against Christianity on another Subject; I mean, that of *Enthusiasm*; which naturally offers itself next to our Consideration. As this is the noble Writer's favourite Topic, we may reasonably expect to see him shine in it: And in one Respect indeed he does. He never touches on the Subject, but he riseth above himself: His Imagination kindles; he catches the Fire he describes; and his Page glows with all the Ardors of this high Passion.

IT will, I presume, be unnecessary to make any Remarks on the large and eminent List of *Enthusiasts*, Poets, Orators, Heroes, Legislators, Musicians, and Philosophers,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 293

fophers, which his Lordship cites from ^{SECT.} PLATO. He may call them *Enthusiasts*, if ^{V.} it seem good to him ; and may justly rank himself in the Number too, if by that Name be understood no more, than a Man of uncommon Strength or Warmth of Imagination ; for this indeed is the requisite Foundation of Excellence, in any of the Characters here enumerated.

THE only Circumstance we are concerned *calmly* to examine, is that of *religious Enthusiasm* : Chiefly, to point out the essential Qualities and Characteristics which distinguish *this* from *divine Inspiration* : Hence to prove, that our *Saviour* and his *Apostles* were not *religious Enthusiasts*, as the noble Writer hath suggested.

'Tis indeed, as his Lordship observes, “ a great Work to judge of Spirits, whether “ they be of God.” We shall willingly join him in this Principle too, “ that in order to this End, we must antecedently “ judge our own Spirit, whether it be of “ Reason or sound Sense, free of every “ byassing Passion, every giddy Vapour, or “ melancholy Fume. This is the first “ Knowledge, and previous Judgment ; to “ understand ourselves, and know what

294 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. " Spirit we are of. Afterwards we may
V. " judge the Spirit in others, consider what
" their personal Merit is, and prove the Va-
" lidity of their Testimony by the Solidity
" of their Brain." On this Principle then
let the Cause be determined.

IN examining this Subject, therefore, we shall find, First, that in *some* Respects, *Enthusiasm* must, from it's Nature, always resemble *divine Inspiration*. Secondly, that in others it hath generally attempted a further Resemblance, but hath always betrayed itself. Thirdly, that in other Circumstances it is diametrically opposite to divine Inspiration, and void even of all seeming Resemblance.

FIRST, *Enthusiasm* must, from it's very Nature, in some Respects always resemble divine *Inspiration*. They both have the *Deity* for their Object; and consequently must both be attended with a devout Turn of Mind. They must both be subject to strong and unusual Impressions; the one *supernatural*; the other *præternatural*, that is, beyond the ordinary Efforts of Nature, tho' really produced by Nature; *these*, thro' their uncommon Force, will often resemble, and not easily be distinguished from *those*
which

which are the real Effect of *supernatural* SECT. V.
Power. This Circumstance deserves a particular Attention: For these two Qualities which are common to both, have induced many to reject the very Notion of divine Inspiration, as mere Ethufiasm. Whereas we see, that, supposing such a thing as divine *Inspiration*, it cannot but resemble *Enthufiasm* in these two Characters.

BUT tho' it were strange, if *Counterfeits* did not hit off some Features of their genuine *Originals*; yet it were more strange, if they should be able to adopt them all, by such a perfect Imitation as to prevent their being detected.

THERE are, therefore, secondly, other Circumstances in which *Enthufiasm* hath generally attempted a further Resemblance of divine *Inspiration*, but in these hath always betrayed itself *spurious*.

The first of this Kind is, "A Pretence to, and Persuasion of the Power of working *Miracles*." This Persuasion must needs be natural to the Enthufiast; because he imagines himself in all things highly favoured of Heaven: The Notion of a Communication of *divine Power* will therefore be among the chief of his *Deliriums*.

296 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. In this the Enthusiast hath been detected,
 V. sometimes by the *Absurdity* of the Miracle attempted, *always* by his *Inability* to perform what he proposed. There is scarce an *Absurdity* so great, but what hath some Time or other been aimed at by Enthusiasts, in the Way of miraculous Power. Their Attempts have ever been void of all *rational Intention*, void of *Beneficence*, void of *common Discernment* : And hence manifestly the Effects of a heated Imagination. That they have always failed in their Attempts is no less known. But these are Truths so willingly allowed by the Enemies of Religion, that we need not enlarge on them. On the contrary, we have seen, the Miracles of the Gospel are *rational*, *beneficent*, *united* in one great *End* ; performed before *Numbers*, before *Enemies* ; recorded by *Eye-Witnesses*. His Lordship indeed objects or insinuates, that the Testimony even of Eye-Witnesses cannot in this Case be a Foundation for Assent, unless we know them to have been “ free both from any “ particular Enthusiasm, and a general Turn “ to Melancholy.” But with Regard to the Miracles of the Gospel, we know that many were converted by them, from their former Prejudices ;

Prejudices ; and therefore could not possibly be under the Influence of the *Christian* Enthusiasm, supposing it such. And as to their being free from *Melancholy* ; for this we may safely appeal to the rational and consistent Accounts given by the sacred Penmen. Melancholy and Enthusiasm must ever produce inconsistent Visions. For a Proof that the Scripture Miracles are not of this Nature, we appeal to what hath been already said on this Subject in the preceeding Section.

SECT.
V.

BUT there is *one* miraculous Gift, *the Gift of Tongues*, which hath more generally been supposed the peculiar Effect of Inspiration. We have an Account of this Kind recorded in holy Writⁱ. And this Account the noble Writer hath thought it expedient to turn to Ridicule ; by representing this supposed miraculous Gift, as the mere Effect of strong *Melancholy*, and natural *Inebriation*. To this Purpose, having observed from Dr. MORE, that “ the Vapours and “ Fumes of Melancholy partake of the Nature of Wine ;” he adds, “ One might “ conjecture from hence, that the malicious “ Opposers of early Christianity were not un-

ⁱ Acts ii.

“ versed

298 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. V. “ versed in this Philosophy ; when they so-
 “ phistically objected against the apparent
 “ Force of the divine Spirit speaking in di-
 “ vers Languages, and attributed it *to the*
 “ *Power of new Wine* ^k.” Agreeably to this in-
 sinuated Charge, he tells us of “ A Gen-
 “ tleman who has writ lately in Defence of
 “ revived Prophecy, and has since fallen
 “ himself into the prophetic Ecstasies.” The
 noble Writer adds, “ I saw him lately un-
 “ der an *Agitation* (as they call it) *uttering*
 “ *Prophecy* in a pompous *Latin Style*, of
 “ which, out of his Ecstasy, it seems, *he*
 “ *is wholly incapable* ^l.”

HERE we may see, how ready some
 People are to strain at a *Gnat*, and yet swal-
 low a *Camel*. The noble Writer ridicules
 the Gift of Tongues from *divine Inspira-*
tion, as absurd and impossible : Yet he be-
 lieves, you see, or *affects* to believe, that
 this Man could speak *Latin* by the sole Force
 of *Imagination* and *Enthusiasm*. A com-
 pendious Method this, of learning Langua-
 ges ! I have somewhere met with a very ra-
 tional Remark, That whereas it was charg-
 ed by FESTUS upon St PAUL, “ that
 “ *Learning* had made him *mad*,” this No-

^k Misc. ii. § 2.

^l Let. on Enth. § 6.

“ tion

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 299

tion inverts the Charge; for thus “ *Mad-* SECT.
“ *ness* may make a Man *learned*.” V.

BUT leaving his Lordship's Admirers to determine which is the greater Miracle, a *Gift* of Tongues from *God*, or a Gift of Tongues from *Melancholy*; 'tis our Part to shew the essential Characters of Distinction between the *Reality* of *one*, and the *Pretences* of the *other*. Now this will appear most evident, if we compare them, both in their *Manner*, and their *End*. As to the *Manner* of this *new prophecying Sect*, the noble Writer himself tells us, it was that of *Ecstasy* and *Convulsion*; and that he saw this Gentleman under an *Agitation* when he had the *Gift of Tongues*. As to the *End* pretended in this miraculous *Gift*; it appears there was really *none*: For the *pompous Latin Style* was uttered among a People who, in general, understood the *English Language only*: It could therefore serve to no *rational Purpose*. On the contrary, it appears that the miraculous Gift of Tongues conferred on the Apostles, was *rational* both in its *Manner* and its *End*. There is not the least Hint of it's having been attended with *Ecstasies* or *Convulsions*; nay, it appears from
the

300 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. the Account, that it could not have been so
 V. attended : And from the *Occasion* it appears
 how proper it was, with Regard to it's *End*.
 The Recital is noble and rational : Let
 it answer for itself. “ And there were
 “ dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout
 “ Men, out of *every Nation* under Heaven.—
 “ And they were all amazed, and marvelled,
 “ saying one to another, Behold, are not
 “ all these which speak, *Galileans* ? And
 “ how hear we *every Man* in *our own Tongue*,
 “ wherein we were born ? *Parthians*, and
 “ *Medes*, and *Elamites*, the Dwellers in *Me-*
 “ *sopotamia*, and in *Judea*, and *Cappodocia*,
 “ in *Pontus* and *Asia*, *Phrygia* and *Pam-*
 “ *phylia*, in *Egypt*, and in the Parts of *Libya*
 “ about *Cyrene* : And Strangers of *Rome* ;
 “ *Jews* and *Profelytes*, *Cretes* and *Arabians* ;
 “ we do hear them speak in our *Tongues*
 “ *the wonderful Works of God* !” How just
 an Effort of divine Power ! which should
 at once give *Instruction* to those who most
 wanted it ; and be the *natural Means* of
 conveying and *dispersing* the glad Tydings
 of the *Gospel*, to *every Nation under Heaven* !—
 It should seem probable, therefore, that the
 Men who “ mocked and said, these Men are
 “ full of new Wine,” were the *Natives of*
Judea.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 301

Judea. For PETER, we find, immediately SECT. V.
arose, and addressed himself to these in par-
ticular. “Ye Men of *Judea*,” &c. And
it was natural for them to entertain this
Suspicion; because they neither understood
what the Apostles uttered, nor could imagine
how they should obtain a Knowledge of so
many various Tongues. They must, there-
fore, naturally suspect, that the Apostles were
uttering *unmeaning Sounds*: And this they
regarded as the Effect of *Wine*.

ANOTHER remarkable Circumstance, in
which Enthusiasts have often pretended to
resemble the divinely inspired, is “the Gift
“ of Prophecy.” Which, indeed, is no more
than another Kind of Miracle. In this too,
Enthusiasm hath always betrayed itself.
First, and principally, with regard to the
Event. The frequent Attempts of this Kind,
and their perpetual *Failure*, need not here
been umerated: They are known sufficiently.
This cannot be charged on the *Apostles* with
the least Appearance of Reason: For it is
a Gift they hardly ever pretended to. Our
Saviour indeed foretold many and great
Events—the Defection of PETER; his own
Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascen-
sion; the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the
Persecution

302 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. V. Persecution of his Disciples, the Propagation of his Religion among the Gentiles, the approaching Miseries and final Destruction of *Jerusalem*. Now all these Events were clearly accomplished : So far, therefore, are they from proving him an *Enthusiast*, that they demonstrate him possessed of *divine Fore-Knowledge*.

BUT besides the *Event*, there is a notable Circumstance in the *Manner*, which hath ever distinguished *real* from *pretended*, *true* from *false* Prophecy: And which the noble Writer's groundless Affirmations have made it necessary to insist on.

HE says, " I find by present Experience, " as well as by all Histories sacred and profane, that the Operation of this Spirit " is every where the *same* as to the *bodily* " *Organ* ^m." In Confirmation of this he cites a Passage from the Gentleman who was subject to the prophetic Ecstasies, which informs us " that the ancient Prophets had " the Spirit of God upon them under Ecstasy, with divers strange Gestures of Body " denominating them Madmen (or Enthusiasts) as appears evidently, says he, in " the Instances of *Balaam*, *Saul*, *David*,

^m *Let. on Enth.* § 6.

" *Ezekiel*,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 303

“ *Exekiel, Daniel*,” &c. And he adds, SECT. V.
the Gentleman “ proceeds to justify this by
“ the Practice of the apostolic Times, and
“ by the Regulation which the Apostle
“ himself applies to these seemingly irregu-
“ lar Gifts °.” In this Instance it is not
unpleasant to observe the different Views of
his Lordship, and the Gentleman he refers
to, in their Endeavours to establish this
pretended Fact. The *one* was zealous to
fix a Resemblance between the *old* and the
new prophetic Manner, in order to strengthen
the Credit of the *revived* Prophecy: The
other's Intention plainly was, by that very
Resemblance, which he was willing should
pass for *real*, to destroy the Credit of the
Scripture Prophecies, well knowing that the
other deserved none.

BUT so it happens, that the noble Wri-
ter's Friend proves as bad an *Historian*, as
he was a *Prophet*: And fails as miserably
in relating *past* Events, as in foretelling
future. The Truth is, that both his Lord-
ship and the Gentleman seem to have been
in a *Fit of Enthusiasm*, and have therefore
been induced to mingle a little *pious Fraud*,
thro' a Zeal for their respective *Theories*.

° *Ib.* ° *Ib.*

For

304 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. V. For in Reality, this pretended Resemblance is utterly fictitious. There is not the least Hint in Scripture, that any of the Persons mentioned as true Prophets, were ever subject to these *Ecstatic, convulsive* Motions, which the enthusiastic Gentleman and his Tribe were always seized with. As to the Regulation made by the Apostle PAUL ; whoever consults the Place ^p will find, there is no Mention made of *Ecstasies, Convulsions*, or extraordinary *bodily Motions*. And 'tis clear, that our Saviour always delivered his Prophecies on every *incidental* Occasion, under all the *common Circumstances* of human Life ; *calm, serene*, and with *unaffected Deliberation*. So that the whole Charge is a bold, continued Falshood, void of Truth, and even the Appearance of it.

INDEED, from the Instances which the noble Writer cites from VIRGIL and LIVY, 'tis evident that the old *beaten Pretenders* to Prophecy were affected in the same *convulsive* Manner, as the *modern Christian Enthusiasts*. His Lordship might have cited twenty more from ancient Writers. And what can be rationally inferred from them ? What but this — “ That this *convulsive*

^p 1 *Corinth.* c. xiv.

“ *Agitation*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 305

“ *Agitation of the bodily Organs is a Cir-* SECT.
V.
“ *cumstance that effectually betrays Entbu-*
“ *siasm; and distinguisheth it from the real*
“ *Inspirations recorded in holy Writ.*”

THESE are the Circumstances in which Enthusiasm will generally *seem to resemble* real Inspiration: tho’ on a nearer Scrutiny, these very Circumstances will always *detect* it. We come now to enumerate those other Qualities peculiar to Enthusiasm, in which it bears no Resemblance to divine Inspiration, and in which they are, at first View, clearly distinguished from each other. And here it is remarkable, that, as the noble Writer *dwells* on the *former*, so he scarce ever *touches* on these following Characters of *clear distinction*. This peculiar Conduct can hardly be judged *accidental*: For a Man of Wit can easily improve a *partial* Resemblance into a *complete* one: But to have added other *Features*, of absolute *Dissemblarity*, would have weakened the *Likeness*, and consequently have disgraced the *intended Representation*.

THE chief Qualities, which clearly, and at first View, distinguish *Enthusiasm* from divine *Inspiration*, I find enumerated by the

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fine

306 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. V. fine Writer of the *Letter on St. Paul's Conversion*. These are, "*Heat of Temper, Melancholy, Credulity, Self-Conceit, and Ignorance.*" So far as these relate to ST. PAUL, the Reader is referred to the excellent Work here cited. 'Tis our Part to consider them as they may affect our Saviour, and the rest of his Apostles. And a brief Consideration may suffice: For all (except the last) are so repugnant to their Characters, that the very Mention of them refutes the Imputation.

WITH REGARD to the first of these Qualities, "*uncommon Heat of Temper,*" 'tis of all others most abhorrent from our Saviour's Character. He is every where sedate, cool, and unmoved, even under the most bitter Circumstances of Provocation^a: He every where appears a perfect Model of Benevolence, Meekness, and mild Majesty. The same Temper generally prevails among his Apostles: More particularly we may observe of the *Evangelists*, who are the *immediate Evidences*, that in their Writings they discover the most perfect *Coolness*. Had they been of a fiery Disposition, they had

^a See Dr. Law's *Life of Christ*: Where his Character is described at large.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 307

not failed to load the Enemies of their ^{SECT.}
crucified Lord, with the bitterest *Sarcasms*. ^{V.}

WITH as little Reason can *Melancholy* be charged on the Founders of Christianity. Our *Saviour* came, “eating and drinking:” So entirely *open, unreserved, and social*, that he was branded by his Enemies, as a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*. Another Circumstance, besides the Passion for *Solitude*, hath ever distinguished *Melancholy*: That is, “an *Over-Fondness* and *Desire* to suffer “in the apprehended Cause of Truth, beyond the just and rational *Ends of Suffering*.” Now this is diametrically opposite to the Character of our Saviour and his Apostles: For even JESUS himself was in an *Agony* at the Apprehension of his approaching Sufferings. So far were his Disciples from being tainted with this *Melancholy*, that they discovered *unmanly Fear*; for *they all forsook him and fled*. ’Tis true, they afterwards endured the severest Trials with unshaken Constancy; yet still, with the *resigned Spirit of Martyrs*; not the *Eagerness* and *fanatic Vaunts* of all known *Enthusiasts*^r.

^r For a remarkable Instance of this, see a Story relating to SAVANOROLA. *Charact. Misc.* ii. c. I. in the Notes.

308 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
V.

THE Charge of *Credulity* hath no better Foundation. To our Saviour himself it is in it's very Nature utterly *inapplicable*. His Disciples have been often charged with *Credulity*. But on impartial Examination it will appear, that the Charge is groundless. For this is an unvarying Circumstance in the Credulity of an Enthusiast, "that it never admits a Doubt." But it is evident from the united Accounts of the Gospel-History, that they often, nay always *doubted* of our Saviour's *Death*, tho' himself foretold it. 'Tis equally evident, they not only doubted of, but almost disbelieved his Resurrection, till overcome by irresistible Evidence. These Circumstances afford another collateral Proof, that the Apostles were not Enthusiasts: Because it is essentially of the Nature of Enthusiasm, "to run on headlong in the *open Channel of the First conceived Opinion*." Now 'tis evident, they *changed* their *first Opinion* concerning the *temporal* Dominion of CHRIST, into the firm Belief of his *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *spiritual* Kingdom: We cannot therefore justly charge them with that *Credulity*, which is the Characteristic of *Enthusiasm*.

* See this Point treated with great Particularity of

THE

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 309

THE next Circumstance, *Self-Conceit*, SECT. V. which hath ever been one of the most distinguishing Qualities of Enthusiasm, is so distant from the Character of JESUS and his *Apostles*, that it hath never, I believe, been laid to their Charge. The Enthusiast is perpetually boasting of immediate *Converse* and *Communication* with the *Deity*; and overflows with a Contempt of all, who are not of his own System. In our Saviour we discover the most unfeigned *Humility* and *Compassion* towards all Men. When urged to shew his *Pretensions* to a divine Mission, so far is he from resolving them into *inward Feelings*, *Impulses*, or *Notices* from God (the constant Practice of every Enthusiast) that, on the contrary, he calmly appeals to his Works and Doctrines^t; adding, in a Strain the *Reverse* of all *Enthusiasm*, that “in what we bear Witness only to ourselves, our Witness cannot be established as a Truth.” The same Turn of Mind appears in the Apostles. They affect no Superiority themselves, nor express or

Proof, in a Pamphlet intitled, “*A Discourse proving that the Apostles were no Enthusiasts.*” By A. Campbell, S. T. P.

^t *Mat.* vii. 16.

^u *John* v. 31.

310 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. discover any Contempt or *spiritual Pride*
V. with Regard to others.

THE last Quality common to Enthusiasts, is that of *Ignorance*. This hath been sometimes charged on our Saviour himself: often on his Apostles with an Air of Triumph. But so it is, that *seeming Objections* against Truth become often the *strongest Evidence* in Support of it. This will eminently appear in the present Case, if we consider “that Ignorance or Want of Letters, when “joined with Enthusiasm, must always “produce the most *inconsistent* Visions, “*whimsical* Conduct, and *pernicious* Doctrines.” These Effects, *Ignorance* and *Enthusiasm* have wrought wherever they appeared, in every Age and Nation. Nor can it indeed be otherwise: For a *lettered* Enthusiast may be supposed to have an *internal Balance*, which must in some Degree *counteract* and *regulate* his Visions; while the *unlettered* is subject to no Controul, but must become the Sport and Prey to the *delirious* Flights of an *unreined Imagination*.

Now, that the Apostles and Evangelists were *unlearned*, must needs be granted: And tho’ the noble Writer hath taken upon him to deride them on this Account; yet this

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 311

this very Circumstance, compared with their SECT.
V.
Conduct and Writings, clears them at once
from the Charge of Enthusiasm. So far
were they from the *ravings* of this Passion,
common to all *ignorant* Enthusiasts, that we
may defy the Enemies of *Christianity* to
produce any Instance either of Speech or
Practice, that hath the smallest Tincture of
Extravagance. Their Conduct was regu-
lar and exemplary; their Words were *the*
Words of Truth and Soberness.

As to the Charge of Ignorance against
our Saviour, the Enemies of Christianity
have been more *cautious*: Yet it hath been
insinuated. And indeed, that he had not
the common Aids of *human Learning*, is
not only *acknowledged*, but *insisted* on. Could
ignorant and *blind Enthusiasm* then have
produced the sublime *religious Doctrines* and
moral Precepts which the Evangelists have
recorded from his Mouth? With as much
Truth it might be affirmed that the *Crea-*
tion is the Produce of *Chance*. With Reason
then may we ask the noble Writer this
Question, "Whence then had this Man
" *such Wisdom*, seeing he spake as never Man
" spake?" And the Answer sure is *one* only,
" That as it was not from *Man*, it must

312 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. V. "have been from God." For even the Enemies of Christianity have born Witness to it's Excellence, even when they intended to disgrace it : While with fruitless Labour they have attempted to prove, " that the " most exalted *Truths* and *Precepts* of the " *Gospel* may be found scattered among the " Writings of the *heathen Sages*."

FROM these concurrent Circumstances, therefore, we obtain a full *internal Proof*, that the *Founders of Christianity* were not *Enthusiasts*, as the noble Writer hath, by the most laboured and repeated Insinuations, attempted to represent them.

SECTION VI.

SECT. VI. SINCE therefore we have appealed to the *religious* and *Moral Doctrines* of *Christianity*, as a concurrent Proof of it's *divine Original* ; it will be necessary now to examine what the noble Writer hath alledged or suggested against this most *essential* Part of our Religion.

AND first, it appears from the general Turn of the *Characteristics*, that the noble Author regards *religious Establishments* as being quite at a distance from *Philosophy* and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 313

and *Truth*, with which he tells us, in ancient S E C T.
VI.
Times they never interfered: He therefore

derides every Attempt to make them *co-alesce*. Thus he tells us, “Not only *Visio-*
“*naries* and *Enthusiasts* of all Kinds were
“tolerated by the Ancients; but, on the
“other Side, Philosophy had as free a
“Course, and was permitted as a Balance
“against Superstition.—Thus Matters were
“happily balanced; Reason had fair Play;
“Learning and Science flourished. Won-
“derful was the Harmony and Temper
“which arose from all these *Contrarieties*.”
Such therefore being his Lordship’s Idea of
a *public Religion*, which he ever opposes to
private Opinion and Philosophy; ’tis no
Wonder he should insinuate the Folly of
Christianity, which promiseth to all it’s Pro-
felytes, “that they shall know the *Truth*,
“and the *Truth* shall make them *free*.”

BUT notwithstanding the noble Writer’s
Partiality to the System of ancient Paganism,
which he had deeply imbibed from his fa-
miliar Converse with ancient Writers; no
unprejudiced Mind can hesitate a Moment,
in determining the superior Excellence of
the *Christian Religion*, compared with these

” *Lst. on Enthus.*

well-

314 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. *well-meant, but defective Schemes of heathen Policy.* For, as gross Error, and Misapprehension of the divine Nature and Attributes, was deeply interwoven with ancient Paganism; so, 'tis well known, that in Fact, the most horrid Enormities were committed *upon Principle*, under the Authority and Example of their pretended Gods. Lord SHAFTESBURY himself owns, what indeed it were folly to deny, that the *Imitation of the Deity* is a *powerful Principle of Action**. If so, it follows, that to communicate a just Idea of the divine Perfections to all Mankind, must tend to *secure their Virtue*, and *promote their Happiness*. 'Tis therefore equally *ungenerous and impolitic*, to suffer Mankind to live in *Ignorance and Idolatry*. Hence 'tis evident, that *Reformations* in Religion are not the ridiculous Things his Lordship would represent them; and that *Christianity*, if indeed it *reveals the Truth*, is a Religion in it's Tendency much more *beneficial* to Mankind than ancient *Paganism*.

'Tis no difficult Task to assign the original Cause of this so different and even *opposite Genius* of the *pagan Systems* from that

* *Enq. on Virtue.*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 315

of *Christianity*. In early and ignorant SECT.
Ages, the Necessity of religious Belief and VI.
religious Establishments was seen by the

Leaders of Mankind : On this Account they instituted the most *salutary* Forms and Doctrines, which their unexperienced Reason could suggest. As Nations grew wiser and more polished, they saw the Weakness and Absurdity of these established Systems ; but thro' a Regard, and perhaps a *mistaken* one, to the *public Good*, were unwilling to discover these Defects and Absurdities to the People. Hence probably the Rise of *ex-oteric* and *esoteric* Doctrines. For the furthest that human Policy dared to go, was to reveal the Truth to a *few initiated* : While the Bulk of Mankind, even in the *wisest* and *politest* *Ages*, continued the *Dupes* to the *Prejudices* and *Superstitions* of the most *ignorant* ones. On the contrary, it was a main Design of the Christian Dispensation, to dispel this Cloud of Ignorance, which excluded Mankind from all Participation of *divine Truth* ; to reveal those just and sublime Ideas of the *Divinity*, which are the noblest, as they are the surest Foundation, not only of *Piety* but of *Morals* : And which, so far as they can affect either

Piety

316 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. *Piety or Morals* (such is the Triumph of *Christianity* over the laboured Researches of *false Wisdom*) are no less *intelligible* to the *Peasant* than the *Philosopher*. On this Account, *Christianity* was perfect (*relatively* perfect) in it's first Delineation: All Attempts to change or add to its Doctrines, have but discovered their own Absurdity: And Experience every Day more and more convinceth us, that the only Method of obtaining a pure and uncorrupt System of practical Religion and moral Precepts, is to search for them in the uncommented Pages of the Gospel.

THUS, what was the Effect of *Necessity* among the *Heathens*, the noble Writer very partially attributes to *Choice*: He mistakes a *Defect* for an *Excellence*: And blindly prefers the Weakness of *Man*, to the Wisdom of GOD.

ANOTHER Cavil frequently urged or insinuated by his Lordship against *Christianity*, seems to have been the natural Consequence of the last-mentioned. He much admires the Pagan Religions, as having been *sociable*, and mutually *incorporated* into each other: And often represents *Christianity*, as of an *unsociable*, *surly*, and *solitary* Complexion, tending

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 317

tending to *destroy* every other but itself. The SECT. VI.
Consequence of this, he tells us, hath been

“ a new Sort of Policy, which extends it-
“ self to another World, and hath made us
“ leap the Bounds of natural Humanity ;
“ and out of a *supernatural Charity*, has
“ taught us the Way of plaguing one an-
“ other most devoutly.” Now with Regard
to this pretended *unsociable* Temper of
Christianity ; it must be owned indeed, that
our Religion tends to swallow up and de-
stroy every other, in the same Manner as
Truth in every Subject tends to destroy
Falsehood : That is, by *rational Conviction*.
The same Objection might be urged against
the *Newtonian Philosophy*, which destroyed
the *Cartesian Fables* : Or against the *Coper-
nican System*, because the clumsy *Visions* of
Ptolemy and *Tycho-Brabe* vanished before it.
The same might be urged against the Use-
fulness, of the great *Source of Day*, because
it *dims* and *extinguishes* every inferior Lustre :
For the glimmering Lamps of human Know-
ledge, lighted up by the Philosophers,
served indeed to conduct them as a *Light*
shining in a dark Place ; but these must
naturally be sunk in a superior Lustre, when

’ *Let. on Entbu.*

the

318 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. *the Sun of Righteousness should arise.* The Gospel therefore is so far *unsociable*, as to discredit *Error*; and is incompatible with *this*, as *Light* with *Darkness*: But not so *unsociable*, as to *compel* the erroneous. As to the religious Debates, then, which Christianity hath occasioned, and the Wars and Massacres consequent upon them, which the noble Writer so justly detests; Christianity stands clear of the Charge, till it can be shewn that it countenanceth the inhuman Principle of Intolerance: And this, it's bitterest Enemies can never do 'Tis true, that if we be so irrational as to take our Idea of Christianity from the Representations of Enthusiasts and Bigots, nothing can appear more absurd and mischevius: As, in like Manner, if we consider the *Heavens* under the perplexed Revolutions and malignant Aspects of the old Astronomers and Astrologers, nothing can be more unworthy either of divine Wisdom or Goodness. But how can these false *Images* affect the noble *Simplicity*, and *Benignity* of the *Gospel*, or the *Solar System*? To the *Works* and the *Word* of God, we must repair, for a true Idea of their undisguised Perfection: And there we shall read their divine Author, in
the

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 319

the brightest Characters of Wisdom and SECT.
Goodness. So far therefore is Christianity VI.
from encouraging Wars and Massacres, on
Account of a Difference in Opinion, that
it's divine Founder hath expressly warned
his Followers against the Suggestions of this
horrid Temper^z: Nor can these fatal Con-
sequences ever arise among *Christians*, till
they have divested themselves of *Christian*
Charity, and^a mistaken the very Principles
of their Profession.

BUT the noble Writer proceeds to still
more bitter Invectives, if possible, against
Christianity. For he often insinuates, that
the Prospect of Happiness and Misery in
another Life, revealed in the Gospel, tends
to the Destruction of all *true Virtue*^b. In-
deed we cannot much Wonder that his
Lordship should treat Christianity in this
Manner, when we consider what he hath
thrown out against Religion in general, in
this Respect. These Cavils have already
been considered at large: Whatever there-
fore he hath insinuated against our Religion
in *particular*, will naturally be refer'd to,
and effectually be refuted by these more
general Observations^c. However, there are

^z *Luke ix.* ^a *Ib.* ^b *Wit and H.* p. ii. § 3. ^c See
above, *Eff.* ii. § 9.

320 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. two or three Passages on this Subject so remarkable, that they may seem to deserve a
VI. separate Consideration.

AFTER having ridiculed and branded Christianity, as destroying the *disinterested* Part of Virtue, he tells us "The *Jews* as well as Heathens were left to their Philosophy to be instructed in the sublime Part of Virtue, and induced by *Reason* to that which was never enjoyn'd them by Command. No Premium or Penalty being enforced in these Cases, the disinterested Part subsisted, the Virtue was a free Choice, and the Magnanimity of the Act was left intire^d."

HERE, again, the noble Writer hath got to his *Peculiarities*. What other Title this Passage may deserve, we shall soon discover. For, first, supposing his Assertion true, what he notes in the *Jewish* and *Heathen* Religions as an *Excellence*, had certainly been a *Defect*. For are not *Hottentots*, wild *Indians*, and *Arabs*, "left to their Philosophy, to be induced by Reason to that which was never enjoined them by Command? No Premium or Penalty

^a *Wit. and H.* p. ii. § 3.

"being

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 321

SECT.

VI.

“being inforced in these Cases, the disinterested Part subsists, the Virtue is a free Choice, and the Magnanimity of the Act is left entire.” Thus the noble Writer would again debase us into Savages^e; and, rather than not disgrace Christianity, would put the State of *Palestine, Greece, and Rome*, on a Level with that of the *Cape of Good Hope: Blindly* (or shall we say, *knowingly?*) disparaging, what he elsewhere so justly applauds, “Laws, Constitutions, civil and RELIGIOUS Rites, whatever *civilizes* or *polishes* rude Mankind^f.”

BUT in Fact, neither the Jews nor *civilized Heathens* were ever tainted with this *Phrenzy*. They saw the Necessity of religious Belief; and as they saw it's Necessity, so they inforced it. With Regard to the Jews, the noble Writer contradicts himself within the Compass of ten Lines: For there he says, “their Religion taught no future State, nor exhibited any Rewards or Punishments, *besides such as were temporal.*” This is the very Truth. Here then he owns a *temporal Sanction* of Premium and Penalty, *Reward and Punishment*: Yet in the Passage above cited, and

^e See above, *Essay* ii. § 10. ^f *Moralists*, Part i. § 3.

Y

which

322 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. which stands close by the other in the Original, he says, “there was no Premium “or Penalty enforced, no Reward or Punishment!” His Lordship deals as *fairly* and *consistently* by the civilized Heathens: For, could he indeed have forgot the distinguished Rank, which, in the *Elysian Fields*, was assigned to those who *fell* to *save their Country*?

*Hic Manus ob PATRIAM pugnando vulnera passi—
Omnibus his nivea cinguntur tempora vitta^s.*

AND now let the Impartial determine, whether the noble Writer's Observation hath more of *Sagacity* or of *Truth* in it.

BUT the Christian Doctrines relating to an *hereafter*, are to undergo a yet severer *Inquisition* from the noble Writer: They are to be tortured and *mangled* on the *Rack*, of *Wit* shall I say, or of *Buffoonry*? “The “Misfortune is, we are seldom taught to “comprehend this SELF, by placing it in “a distinct View from it's Representative “or *Counterfeit*. In our *holy* Religion, “which, for the greatest Part, is adapted to “the very meanest Capacities, 'tis not to “be expected that a Speculation of this

^s *Encid.* lib. vi.

“ Kind,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 323

“ Kind should be openly advanced. ’Tis ^{SECT.}
 “ enough that we have Hints given us of a ^{VI.}
 “ *nobler SELF*, than that which is commonly
 “ supposed the Basis and Foundation of our
 “ Actions. *Self-Interest* is there taken as it
 “ is vulgarly conceived — In the same Man-
 “ ner as the celestial Phænomena are in
 “ the sacred Volumes generally treated ac-
 “ cording to common Imagination, and the
 “ then current System of Astronomy and
 “ natural Science; so the moral Appear-
 “ ances are in many Places preserved
 “ without Alteration, according to *Vulgar*
 “ *Prejudice*. — Our real and genuine *Self*
 “ is sometimes supposed that *ambitious* one,
 “ which is fond of Power and Glory; some-
 “ times that *childish* one, which is taken
 “ with *vain Shew*, and is to be invited to
 “ Obedience by Promise of *finer Habitations*,
 “ *precious Stones*, and *Metals*, shining Gar-
 “ *ments*, *Crowns*, and other such *dazling*
 “ *Beauties*, by which another Earth, or
 “ material City is represented^a.”

THIS Passage contains two insinuated Charges of a very different Nature. The one is *true*, but no *Objection*: The other would indeed be an *Objection*, but that it is

^a *Solil.* Part iii. § 1.

324 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VI.

absolutely *groundless*. 'Tis true "that our
" Religion is for the greatest Part adapted
" to the very meanest Capacities; and that
" the celestial Phænomena are in the sacred
" Volumes generally treated according to
" *common Imagination*," &c. And would
the noble Writer indeed have had it other-
wise? Would he indeed have had them
spoken of, according to the Philosophical
Construction of the Universe, rather than
the received Notions of Mankind? With
how little Reason, we may soon be con-
vinced, if we consider, First, that the *End*
of *Revelation* was not to make Mankind
Proficients in Philosophy, since the Situa-
tion of the Generality can never admit it:
And had the Scriptures supposed this, (as
indeed such a Conduct would have supposed
it) this very Circumstance had been an
Argument of their Falsehood. Secondly,
even Philosophers themselves, tho' inti-
mately acquainted with the Construction of
the Universe, do still *descend* to the *Level*
of *Mankind*, when they speak of the Phæ-
nomena of Nature: The *Sun sets* and *rises*,
as it did three thousand Years ago: The
Moon changes, wains, is new, and old:
The *Stars* are *in the Firmament*, the *Sun*
still

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 325

still rules the Day, and the Moon the Night. SECT.

VI.

The Reason is evident: Because *astronomical Discoveries* have not the least Influence on the *Practice of Mankind*: Because, altho' the *natural Appearances* of things are merely *relative* to the *Imagination only*, yet they are, for that very Reason, necessary to be referred to, as the *Imagination* is the great *universal Instrument* of *Life* and human *Action*.

AN Objection therefore to the Scriptures on this Account, betrays either a gross *Misapprehension* of human Nature, or the most unpardonable *Insincerity*; yet we find Objections of this kind frequently urged: as if, because the sacred Penmen were empowered by God to reveal to us a certain Measure of *religious* and *moral* Truth, suited to our present State, they must therefore be endued with *Omniscience*; in order to make all Men not only *good Subjects*, but good *Astronomers* too!

BUT tho' it were *Folly* to object against the *sacred Penmen*, because they appear not to have been *omniscient*; yet I cannot conclude this Argument, without producing a remarkable Instance, wherein their very *Ignorance* of these *speculative* and *unnecessary*

326 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. *Truths* becomes a convincing Proof of their
VI.

VERACITY: A Circumstance which much more nearly concerns us. We read in the Book of *Joshua*, "And he said in the Sight of *Israel*, SUN, stay thou in *Gibeon*, and "thou MOON, in the Valley of *Ajalon*:" "And the *Sun* abode, and THE MOON "STOOD STILL,—and hasted not to go "down for a whole Dayⁱ." Here, the *standing still* of these Luminaries is related in such a Manner as concurs with the common Appearances of things; and yet consists with the best Discoveries in Astronomy, tho' unknown to the Writer. For we are now assured that, if *the Sun stood still*, it must have been by suspending the diurnal Rotation of the Earth: The *standing still of the Moon* was therefore the *necessary Consequence*. This the Writer appears not to have known; Yet he relates the *Fact*, tho' it was of no Importance with Regard to that Event for which the Miracle was wrought. It is therefore of singular Force in proving the *Veracity of the Writer*, because, had it not been true in Fact, it is a *Circumstance which could never have occur'd to him*.

THE noble Writer's other Charge relating to the *moral Representations* of the

ⁱ *Joshua* x.

Scriptures,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 327

Scriptures, would indeed be of Weight, if SECT.
it were founded in Truth: But so far from VI.

this, that he hath utterly *reversed* the Fact. For in Reality, these *sensible* Representations of *visible* Beauty and Glory, are only *occasionally* or *accidentally* hinted; while the whole *Weight* and *Energy* of the *Gospel* is employed in inforcing the Idea of *moral Perfection*, of our nobler SELF, of *Self-Interest* in the *higher* Sense, of the Necessity of extirpating every meaner Passion, and cherishing the great one of *unbounded Love*, as the necessary and only Discipline that can qualify us for future Happiness. 'Tis evident that the noble Writer lays the principal Stress of his Charge, on the *Apocalypse*; a Work in it's whole Turn *strictly allegorical*, and therefore necessarily conversant in *Imagery* and *visible Representation*. To this he hath most *perversly* added a figurative Expression of St. PAUL, who writing to a People among whom the *Prize-Races* prevailed, represents the Christian *Progress* as a *Contest* of this Kind; and shews it's Superiority over the Former, "because, saith he, "they labour to obtain a *corruptible*, but "we an *incorruptible Crown*." In the mean

328 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. Time he hath omitted the many *Discourses*,
VI. *Parables*, *Maxims*, of our Saviour, in which
 he perpetually exhorts his Disciples to endeavour after unfeigned Virtue and universal Benevolence, as the only Means that can bring them to future *Perfection*. He hath forgot too the repeated Exhortations of St. PAUL, who sets CHARITY so high above every other Gift or Possession, and adds, the Reason of it's Preheminence, "because
 "it shall never fail." 'Tis true indeed, as the noble Writer observes (with what Intention, 'tis no difficult Matter to determine)
 "that our holy Religion is for the greatest
 "Part adapted to the very meanest Capacities:" We may add, "and to the very
 "worst of Dispositions too." And 'tis one of it's chief Glories, that it is so. Therefore we find it inforcing every *Motive* that can work on every *Mind*: Which must surely be acknowledged as the Character of the Religion that should come from him who knew what was in Man. But if the noble Writer would further insinuate, that the Idea of future Happiness ought to be confined to that of virtuous Enjoyment, whereas the Christian Religion doth not so confine it; we have already seen, that, from
 the

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 329

the Nature of things, this Refinement is SECT.
visionary and groundless^k.” VI.

WE now come to the Examination of a Passage more *extraordinary* and *original* than any yet produced. The noble Writer tells us, “ I could be almost tempted to think, “ that the true Reason why some of the most “ *heroic Virtues* have so little Notice taken “ of them in our *holy Religion*, is, because “ there would have been no Room left for “ *Disinterestedness*, had they been entitled “ to a Share of that infinite Reward, which “ Providence has *by Revelation* assigned to “ other Duties. *Private Friendship*, and “ *Zeal* for the *Public* and *our Country*, are “ Virtues purely *voluntary* in a *Christian*. “ They are no essential *Parts* of his *Charity*. “ He is not so tied to the Affairs of *this* “ *Life*; nor is he obliged to enter into such “ Engagements with this *lower World*, as “ are of *no Help* to him in acquiring a *better*. “ His *Conversation* is in *Heaven*. Nor has “ he Occasion for such *supernumerary Cares* “ and Embarrassments here on Earth, as “ may *obstruct his Way* thither, or retard “ him in the careful Task of working out “ his own *Salvation*^l.”

^k See above, *Essay* ii. § 9. ^l *Wit. and H.* Part ii. § 3.

330 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VI.

WE have already seen, that the real Nature of Virtue consists “in procuring or promoting the greatest public Happiness:” And that this Truth is often, *occasionally*, acknowledged by Lord Shaftesbury himself. Consequently, the *bighest* or most *heroic Virtue*, is that which tends to *accomplish* this great *End*: Nor can any *pretended* Virtue be either *great* or *heroic* that tends to *obstruct* or *destroy* it.

ON this plain Principle, self-evident to unbyassed *Reason*, let us examine the Passage now before us. And first, as to *private Friendship*, which, the noble Writer says, “is a Virtue purely voluntary in a Christian:”—Let us consider how far it may be regarded as a Virtue *at all*.—Now, on strict Enquiry we shall find, that the extreme Degree of Friendship recommended and applauded by the Ancients, and here patronized by the noble Author, is essentially *repugnant* to *true Virtue*: In *Friendship* they placed the *Chief Happiness*:—And if this consists in the supreme Love of *one*, it must needs *diminish*, if not *extinguish*, the Love of *all*; because our chief or whole *Attention* must be *employed*, our every *View* and *Design* centered in giving Pleasure or *procuring Happiness*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 331

Happiness to one *Individual*. And this is SECT.
the very fairest Light it can be view'd in. VI.

FOR we shall further see, how little it generally partakes of the Nature of true Virtue, if we consider whence it hath it's Rise. This is universally allowed to be "a Similarity of *Disposition*, *Will*, and *Manners*." This Circumstance demonstrates, that in general it must be *contrary* to Virtue: For hence, the *general* Good must be often sacrificed to gratify the Will of *one*. Of this dreadful Effect, Instances might be produced almost innumerable. Let one suffice. "Between TIBERIUS GRACCHUS and C. BLOSIUS, a *dear and perfect Friendship* subsisted: The latter "being seized for aiding the former in his "Conspiracy, was brought before the *Consuls*. He pleaded his Friendship to GRACCHUS in Excuse for his Crime." He was then asked, "What, suppose he had bid "you *fire the Capitol*, would you have done "it?" To this he boldly replied, "He "never would have laid me under such a "Necessity; but if he had, *I would have obey'd him*." A *thorough Friend* sure: But a *vile Citizen*; notwithstanding the

m Cic. *Laelius*.

artful

332 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. artful Gloss of an ingenious Modern, who
VI. hath attempted to make out the Innocence
of his Intentions".

'Tis true, the Advocates for this *Attachment* sometimes assert, that it cannot consist but with *Virtue*. That it *ought not*, is certain: That it *cannot*, or *doth not*, is a groundless Conceit; unless they chuse to make this Circumstance a Part of the Definition, which were idle Sophistry. But if by Friendship be meant, what indeed is always meant, "a violent Love and Attachment to another on Account of a Similarity of Manners;" this, 'tis certain, hath often, nay most commonly subsisted without *Virtue*: Among *Savages*, *Robbers*, *Heroes*, and *Banditti*. In LUCIAN's Tract on Friendship we find, that out of Twelve notable Instances alledged, near half the Number were supported at the Expence of *Justice* or *Humanity*; either by the Commission of Rapine, Adultery, or Murder, or by aiding the Escape of those who ought to have suffered for these enormous Crimes. Will any one alledge the Emperor TIBERIUS or his Favourite SEJANUS as Patterns of *Virtue*? Yet their Friendship was so remarkable,

* See Montaigne's *Essay* on this Subject.

that

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 333

that, in Honour of it, Altars were dedicated SECT. VI.
to *Friendship* by a *senatorial Decree*. Nay,

some of the applauded Instances appealed to, by the noble Author in his Comment on this Passage, are even notorious in this Respect. Such were THESEUS and PIRITHOUS, equally remarkable for *Friendship*, *Rapes*, and *Plunder*. And such Instances may still be found in every *savage* Country; where the strongest Friendships are commonly formed: Where Men thus leagued, go upon bold Adventures; and hazard and give up Life for each other without Reluctance, while they *ravish* their Neighbours *Wives*, and *carry off* their *Cattle*.

With as little Reason can it be urged, that Friendships in general are *disinterested*, so as to aspire to the Name of *Merit*. For *Merit*, if it exists, can only arise from *Virtue*: And *Virtue*, we have seen, doth not essentially belong to *Friendship*. Nay, in LUCIAN'S Tract, 'tis warmly debated between the contending Parties, whether *Affection* or *private Advantage* hath a more considerable Share in this applauded *Union*. Indeed the *civilized* and haughty *Greek* stands upon the Punctilio of *Honour*, and piques himself on the Notion of *Disinterest*:
But

334 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VI.

But the *undisguised Scythian* insists that mutual *Advantage and Support* are the ruling *Motives*. However, in Conclusion they fairly agree, in comparing a set of fast Friends to GERYON with *three Heads* and *six Hands*, enabled thro' this Increase of Strength, to overturn all Opposition°. But suppose *Affection* the ruling Principle, as unquestionably it often is; where is the *Merit*, while confined to *one Person*? Nay, it must rather lean towards *Demerit*, because it appears, 'tis rather *dangerous* than *favourable* to *public Affection* and *Virtue*. 'Tis evident then, that the *friendly Affection* is no more *meritorious* than the *conjugal*, *paternal*, or *filial Affection*; which being of a *contracted* Nature, are often consistent with great *Baseness* of Mind, and destructive of a more enlarged *Benevolence*°. And

° *Luciani Toxaris.*

° Thus a Writer of distinguished Abilities: “ Many
“ Instances occur in History and daily Experience, of
“ Men, not ashamed to commit base and selfish Enor-
“ mities, who have retained a Tendernefs for their
“ Posterity by the strong and generous Instinct of Na-
“ ture. The Story of *Licinius Macer*, who was Father
“ to *Calvus* the great Orator, is very remarkable, as
“ related by a Roman Annalist. Having gone thro’
“ the Office of Prætor, and governed a Province, he
“ was accused, upon returning Home, of Extortion

what

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 335

what Degree of *Merit* or *Disinterest* there is in Regards of this Nature, when separate from more extensive ones, we may learn from the noble Writer himself, who says, "there is a *Selfishness* in the Love that is paid to a *Wife*, and in the Attendance on a *Family*, and all the little Affairs of it, which, had I my full Scope of Action in the Public, I should hardly have submitted to:"

SECT.
VI.

So far then is clear, That *Friendship*, or "a violent Affection founded on a Similarity of Disposition and Manners," is more likely to produce *Vice* than *Virtue*; as it tends to fix such Habits of Mind as must lessen our Concern for the *general Good*. And in Fact, every one's Experience will point out to him Numbers of Men, naturally benevolent to all, but so strongly by-assed and drawn in by particular Attach-

"and Abuses of his Power. The very Morning of his Tryal he strangled himself, after having sent Word to *Cicero*, who was preparing to plead against him, that, being determined to put an End to his Life before Sentence (tho' the Penalty did not extend to taking it away) the Prosecution could not go on, and his Fortune would be saved to the Benefit of his Son."—*Considerations on the Law of Forfeiture*, p. 32.

* *Ld. S's Let. to Mr. Molesworth*, Let. ix.

ments,

336 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VI.

ments, that their *Regards* and *Beneficence* are centered wholly on a *select Few*; while the rest of Mankind pass unheeded and unassisted, and have no Share in their Benevolence, further than what *Self-Deceit* throws out, in *unmeaning Wishes* for their Welfare.

'Tis no less evident, that, thro' the natural Advantages of this partial Alliance, Mankind must ever be prone to embrace it, in Exclusion of more extensive Affections, where no such Advantages can follow. It would therefore have been a *Defect* in the *Christian* Religion, to have enjoined or even recommended it in this Extreme. Accordingly we find, in the Gospel, every Attachment of this Kind, however natural and alluring it may be, set very little above the *lowest Selfishness*, and justly represented as entirely consistent with it. "If ye do
"do good to them which do good to you,
"what thank have ye? Do not the Publicans even the same?"

BESIDES; there is something so extraordinary in the noble Writer's Scheme of "enjoying Friendship," as sufficiently exposeth it's own Weakness. Friendship, his

Mat. v.

Lordship

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 337

Lordship allows, can only arise “from a SECT. VI.”
“Consent and Harmony of Minds^s.” How
then could Christianity have *enjoyed* us the
Practice of this *supposed* Virtue? What must
it have *enjoyed* us? Why, to go in *Quest* of
a *Mind* resembling our own. It might
with equal Propriety have enjoyed us to
go in *Quest* of a *Face* resembling our own:
And with as much Reason, for all the Pur-
poses of *true Virtue*.

BUT if by *Friendship* be meant, what
indeed is *not* generally meant, “A parti-
cular Love and Esteem for the virtuous or
worthy,” in which Sense alone it can have
any Tendency to produce true Virtue; then
we may justly affirm, that it is recommend-
ed in the Gospel, both by *Example* and by
Precept. It is naturally involved in that
all-comprehensive Command of *universal*
Charity: For tho’ many have been zealous
in their Friendships, while they were in-
sensible to publick Affection; yet, such is
the Temperament of human Nature, that
no Instance was ever known, of a Man
zealous for the Happiness *of all*, yet remiss
in or incapable of a *true Friendship* for the
worthy. It is recommended by St. PAUL,

^s In the Note.

Z

who

338 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. who says, that “peradventure for a good
VI. “*Man*, one would even *dare to die*.” It is recommended by our Saviour’s Example, who selected a beloved Disciple as his bosom *Friend*, whose Writings are the overflowings of a Heart filled with the purest and most unbounded Love^t. Above all, it is recommended by our Saviour in that noble and divine Passage; “Who is my Mother “or my Brethren? Even *he that doth the Will of my Father* which is in Heaven, he “is my *Brother, and Sister, and Mother*.”

So much for the spurious Virtue of *private Friendship*: Let us next consider the noble Writer’s Charge against *Christianity*, on Account of it’s not enjoying “a Zeal “for the *Public* and our “Country:” For this too, it seems, “is a Virtue purely *voluntary in a Christian*.” Now all the Absurdities which load his Charge with Regard to *Friendship*, fall with equal Weight on this groundless Imputation. For if by “Zeal for the Publick and our Country,” be meant, a Zeal that is inconsistent with the Rights and common Welfare of Mankind, ’tis so far from being a *Virtue*, that, as in the case of *Friendship*, it is really a

^t St. *Jahn*.

^u *Matt. xii.*

Crime,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 339

Crime, because it tends to produce the most fatal Consequences. And an Army of victorious Warriors returning triumphant on this vile Principle, however graced with the flattering Title of *Heroes*, and Ensigns of *Glory*, are in Truth no better than a Band of *publick Robbers*: or, as our great Poet, a Christian and a Lover of Mankind, finely expreffeth it,

*An impious Crew
Of Men conspiring to uphold their State,
By worse than hostile Deeds; violating the Ends
For which our Country is a Name so dear*^w.

Now 'tis evident beyond a Doubt, that at the Time when our Saviour appeared, this destructive *Partiality*, this avowed Conspiracy against the common Rights of Mankind was universally prevalent among the most civilized Nations. The JEWS were not exempted from this common Excess. "*Inter ipsos Fides obstinata, adversus alios hostile Odium,*" was their Character among the Heathens. The *Greeks* and *Romans* committed and boasted of the most cruel Enormities, conquered and enslaved innocent Nations, plundered Cities, and laid

^w *Sampson Agonistes.*

340 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. waste Kingdoms, thro' this absurd and *impious Love* of their *Country*; a Principle no better in many of it's Consequences, than the most horrid and accursed *Bigotry*. It had therefore been an essential Defect, nay rather a mischievous Absurdity, in the Christian Religion, to have enjoyed, encouraged, or countenanced a Partiality unjust in itself; to which, from Views of private Advantage, Mankind must ever be prone; and which, at the Time when Christianity began to spread, was indeed the reigning and *predominant Error*.

BUT if by "Zeal for the Publick and "Love of our Country" be meant, such a Regard to it's Welfare as shall induce us to sacrifice every View of private Interest for it's Accomplishment, yet still *in Subordination* to the *greater Law* of *universal Justice*, this is naturally, nay necessarily involved in the Law of *universal Charity*. The noble Writer indeed affirms, "it is no essential Part of the Christian's Chariy." On the contrary it is a *chief Part* of the Christian's Charity. It comes nobly recommended by the Examples of JESUS and St PAUL: The one wept over the approaching Desolation of his Country: The other declared his

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 341

his Willingness to be cut off from the Christian Community, if by this Means he might save his Countrymen. And that it necessarily ariseth from the Principle of universal Love will be evident, if we consider the *Nature and Situation of Man*. His *Nature* is such, that he inevitably contracts the *strongest* Affection for those with whom he converseth most *intimately*; and whose *Manners and Relations, civil and religious*, are most nearly connected with *his own*. His *Situation* is such, that he seldom hath an Opportunity of doing good Offices to any Society of Men, save only those of his *own Country*; all others being naturally removed beyond the narrow Sphere of private Beneficence. Hence the great Precept of universal Charity doth essentially involve “a Zeal for the “Publick and Love of our Country:” At once it *curbs* the *Exorbitance* of this natural Partiality, and *carries* it to it’s full *Perfection*.

THE Necessity of this great *Regulating* Principle will further appear, if we consider, that with Regard to the Conduct of separate States and Kingdoms towards each other, no Sanctions of human Law can ever take place. In this respect all Nations must ever be in a State of Nature. There was

342 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VI. therefore a more particular Necessity, on this Account, of regulating their Conduct towards each other, by the great Law of *universal Charity*.

IT may seem strange that the noble Writer should be ignorant of these Truths. But after the Imputations he hath here thrown on *Christianity*, it will surely appear *more strange* that he was *not ignorant* of them : And that these bitter Sarcasms were thrown out against the clear Convictions of his own Mind. Yet nothing is more evident, as will now appear. That he understood the Nature of *Christian Charity*, is indisputable : He defines it, and properly, in the Note annexed to the Passage here refer'd to. In another Place, he calls it “ the Principle of *Love*, the greatest Principle “ of our Religion *.” In a following Paragraph he calls it “ that divine Love which “ our Religion teaches y.” But what is of all *most remarkable* ; he sets it, under the new and whimsical Denominations of *Good-Nature* and *Friendship to Mankind*, far above *private* Friendship and Love of our *Country*. Take the Passages as they lie in the noble Writer. “ Can any *Friendship* be so *heroic*,

* *Moralists*, Part ii. § 3. y *Ib.*

“ as

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 343

“ as that towards *Mankind* ? or *particular* SECT. VI.
 “ Friendship well subsist, without such an
 “ enlarged Affection ^a ?” Again. “ *Theocles*
 “ had almost convinced me, that to be a
 “ Friend to any one in particular, ’twas
 “ necessary first to be a Friend to Man-
 “ kind ^a.” Lastly, and above all. “ And
 “ can your *Country*, and what is *more*, your
 “ KIND, require less Kindness from you,
 “ or deserve less to be consider’d, than even
 “ one of these *Chance-Creatures* ?— O *Phi-*
 “ *locles*, how little do you know the Extent
 “ and Power of *Good-Nature*, and to what
 “ an *heroic Pitch* a Soul may rise, which
 “ knows the thorow Force of it ; and *distri-*
 “ *buting it rightly*, frames in itself an *equal*,
 “ *just*, and *universal Friendship* ^b ?” Here
 then we see the former Paragraph utterly
 reversed. For “ *universal Love* is now the
 “ only *heroic Principle* :” And “ *private*
 “ *Friendship* and the Love of *our Country*
 “ are only commendable, as they make
 “ *subordinate Parts* of it.”

To this astonishing and wilful Perver-
 sion of the Moral Principles of *Christianity*,
 we may add the subsequent Part of the
 same invenomed Paragraph. For he pro-

^a Ib. § 1.

^a Ib. § 2.

^b Ib. § 1.

344 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VI.

ceeds to *insinuate*, as if *Christian Charity* were no *active* Principle; but such as leads it's Profelytes to a State of mere *Contemplation* and *Inaction*, without Regard to *social* Life, and the Affairs of this *lower World*. We may defy the noble Writer's most zealous Admirers to find any other rational Construction for the following Passage. "The
" Christian, he says, is not obliged to en-
" ter into such *Engagements* with this *lower*
" *World*, as are of no Help to him in ac-
" quiring a *better*. *His Conversation* is in
" *Heaven*. Nor has he Occasion for such
" *supernumerary Cares*, and *Embarrassments*
" here on Earth, as may *obstruct his Way*
" thither, or *retard* him in the *careful Task*
" of working out *his own Salvation*." Un-
exampled Prevarication! thrown out a-
gainst that Religion which enjoyns an *active*
Virtue, a *Regard* to the *present* Happiness
of Man in *every possible Relation*, as the on-
ly Way to obtain Felicity hereafter: Against
that Religion, whose *Founder* did not *idly*
harangue in a *Closet* upon *Beauty*, *Virtue*,
and *Decorum*, amidst the *Indolence* and *Pride*
of Life; but *practised* the Divine *Truths* he
taught, and "went about doing Good," a-
mongst

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 345

mongst the meanest and most despised of SECT.
his Fellow Citizens. VI.

To be unmoved on this Occasion were *Stupidity*; not to confess it, *Cowardice*. *Error* should be exposed with *Calmness*; but *Dishonesty* merits our Abhorrence.

YET from these Cavils tho' groundless, and Misrepresentations tho' *voluntary*, we may draw an Observation which highly recommends *Christianity*. We may hence see the superior Excellence and Dignity of it's moral Precepts, above the most *applauded* among the Heathen: And how nobly, by one great Principle, it rectifies every little Partiality to which the human Heart is subject. For this is clear; that in one Age or Nation, *Friendship* hath been *idolized* as the supreme Virtue; in another, *Hospitality*; * in a Third, the Love of our *Country*;

* Indeed the noble Writer, pursuing the same kind Intention to Christianity, pretends that the Law of *Hospitality*, or *Regard to Strangers*, among the *ancient Heathens*, was *equivalent* (nay he gives a very ingenious Suggestion, as if it was far *superior*) to *Christian Charity*. "Such, says he, was ancient *Heathen Charity*, and pious Duty towards the whole of
" Mankind; both those of different Nations and *different Worships*." (*Misc. iii. c. 1. in the Notes*) For Instances of this, he is forced to go back as far as *Homer*, who indeed hath given us some fine Pictures of ancient Manners of this kind, in his *Odysssey*. The

in

346 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. in a Fourth, enthusiastic *Contemplation*; in
 VI. a Fifth, the *Austerities* of the Hermit; in
 a Sixth, the *external Practice* of Religion;
 in a Seventh, which is the *fashionable Pec-*
culiarity of our own Times, occasional Acts
of Humanity and Compassion, while the
 more *extensive and Publick Views* of Bene-
 ficence are *neglected* or even *derided*. How
 different, how superior, is the great Chris-
 tian Principle of *universal Love*! Which
 rising gradually, by a Progress thro' all the

noble Writer might have found others, in no Respect
 inferior, in the Old Testament, recorded long before
universal Charity was ever thought of, in the Stories
 of *Abraham* and *Lot*. The Truth is, the *Guest* or
Stranger was held *sacred*, because he was under the
Protection of his *Host*: It was therefore deemed *crimi-*
nal, to violate a *Trust* thus *reposed*. But it happens
 unfortunately for his Lordship's Argument, that in these
 Old Times *Rapine* and *Plunder* were as much in
 Vogue as either *Friendship* or *Hospitality*, and equally
 creditable. These *phantom Appearances of Virtue* are
 still to be seen in the *Arabian Deserts* as frequently as
 ever. If a Traveller comes to the Door of a wild
Arab's Tent at Night, he is received with so bound-
 less an *Hospitality*, that the *Host* would expose himself,
 his Wife, and Children to certain Destruction to save
 the Life of his *Guest*. Had this *hospitable Savage* met
 the Traveller in the Deserts at Noon, he would have
strip'd him to the Skin, and on the least Resistance
 laid him *dead at his Feet*. And this was the true
 Extent of the noble Writer's boasted *Heathen Cha-*
rity.

less

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 347

less enlarged Affections towards Parents, SECT. VI.
Children, Friends, Country, and spreading
till it embraceth all Mankind, and every
Creature that hath Life, forms that *perfect*
Virtue in which human Weakness is most
prone to be *defective*, and which implies
and includes every moral Perfection. *Chris-*
tianity alone hath *kindled* in the Heart of
Man this *vital* Principle; which *beaming*
there as from a *Center*, like the great *Foun-*
tain of *Light* and *Life* that sustains and
cheers the attendant Planets, renders it's
Profelytes indeed “ *burning and shining*
“ *Lights,*” shedding their *kindly Influence*
on all around them, in that just *Proportion*,
which their *respective Distances* may de-
mand.

S E C T I O N VII.

THE preceding Remarks may suffici- SECT. VII.
ently obviate every Cavil of the noble Writ-
er against the *essential* Parts of *Christianity*.
But as his Lordship hath casually intersper-
fed several Random Insinuations, we must
be content to receive them as they happen
to appear, since they are of that disjointed
Kind as to be incapable of Connection.

I N

348 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VII.

IN a marginal Note, he gives an Account of the Migration of the *Israelites* from *Egypt*, under the Conduct of MOSES. He thinks proper to reject the clear Account which the *Jewish Legislator* himself gives, “That they departed, in order to worship “the true God;” and preposterously prefers what TACITUS and JUSTIN have said on that Subject; who affirm indeed, but without Proof, “that the *Jews* were driven “out of *Egypt* on Account of their *Leprosy*.” This Partiality might of itself appear *mysterious* enough, when we consider the particular and consistent Account given us by the very Leader of the Expedition: For, what should we think of the Man, who should prefer the random Conjectures of an ignorant Modern, to XENOPHON’S *Retreat*, or CÆSAR’S *Commentaries*? But the noble Writer’s Partiality will appear still more unaccountable, if we consider the following Passage of STRABO; a Writer as much beyond TACITUS in Candour, as beyond JUSTIN (if indeed JUSTIN and not TROGUS POMPEIUS, be answerable for this Slander) in true Judgement. This Author, STRABO, second to none in Antiquity,

† *Misc. ii. c. i. Notes.*

speaks

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 349

speaks thus : “ MOSES, an *Egyptian Priest*, SECT.
VII.
 “ retreated along with a number of *religious*
 “ *Followers*. For he affirmed and taught,
 “ that the *Egyptians* were mistaken, who
 “ imaged the Deity under the Forms of the
 “ Brute-Creation; as likewise the *Libyans*
 “ and *Greeks*, who represented the *Gods*
 “ under the *human Shape*. He held that
 “ alone to be *God*, which comprehends eve-
 “ ry living Creature, the Earth, and Sea ;
 “ which is called *Heaven*, the *World*, or the
 “ *universal Nature* ; whose *Image*, who
 “ that is in his right Mind, would dare to
 “ form out of any *earthly Materials*? Re-
 “ *jecting* therefore all use of *Images*, he de-
 “ termined to dedicate to him a Temple
 “ worthy of his Nature, and worship him
 “ without Images. — On this Principle he
 “ persuaded and brought over many well-
 “ *disposed Men*, and led them forth into
 “ that Country *where now Jerusalem is*
 “ *built*.” A noble Testimony, sure, from

Ἡ Μωσὶς γὰρ τις τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἱερέων — ἀπῆρεν
 ἐκεῖσε. — Εἶπε γὰρ ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἐδίδασκεν ὡς καὶ ὀρθῶς
 φρονεῖσιν οἱ Αἰγυπτῖοι θηρίοις εἰκαζόντες καὶ βοσκημάσι
 τὸ θεῖον· ὅδ’ οἱ Λίθους. καὶ ἐν δὲ ὅδ’ οἱ Ἐκλίνας ἀνθρώ-
 πομορφῶς τυπκόντες· εἶη γὰρ ἐν τῷτο μόνον θεὸς τὸ πε-
 ριέχον ἡμᾶς ἀπαντᾶς καὶ γῆν καὶ θάλατταν, ὁ καλυμμεν
 a Heathen

350 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. a Heathen Writer: *Less* he could not say,
VII. if he was well informed ; and, unless he had
embraced the *Jewish* Religion, he could
not have said *more*.

THERE is another Passage (*Misc. v. c. i.*)
which discovers somewhat of unfair dealing
in the noble Writer. In the Margin, he
prettily enough criticizes the Preface to St.
LUKE's Gospel. But in the Text he hath
paraphrased the Evangelist's Expression, in
a Manner so distant from any thing St. LUKE
either wrote or *meant*, as must not a little
astonish every candid Reader. St. LUKE
says, "*It seemed good to him to write in Or-*
"*der the Things that he knew.*" To which
the noble Writer adds, "As there were
"many, it seems, long afterwards, who did ;
"and undertook accordingly, to write in
"Order and *as seemed good to them, &c.*"—
What shall we say of the noble Writer on
this Occasion ? Why, this only ; "That

ουρανόν και κόσμον, και την των ούλων φύσιν. Τὰς
δε τις αὐτὴν εἰκόνα πλατύνει θαρρήσειεν ἔχειν ὁμοίαν
τινὰ των παρ' ἡμῖν ; ἀλλ' εἰ δει πᾶσαν ξοανοποιῖαν,
τεμενος ἀφορισανίας και σηκόν ἀξιολογόν τιμᾶν εἶδεν
χωρὶς.—Εκεῖνος μὲν οὖν τοιαύτα λεγὼν ἐπέσειεν εὐγνω-
μονας ἀνδρας καὶ ὀλίγους, και ἀπηγαγεν ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον
τῆς πόλεως, ὅπου νῦν ἐστὶ τὸ ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολυμοῖς κτίσμα.
Strabo, l. xvi.

in-

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 35 †

“ inasmuch as it *seemed good to him* to inter-
“ pret this Preface of St. LUKE, he therefore
“ thought himself at Liberty to interpret it
“ *as it seemed good to him.*”

SECT.
VII.

THERE are three more Subjects which his Lordship hath thought fit to represent in the Manner which *seemed good to him*. These are, first, the divine Foreknowledge communicated to JOSEPH in the Interpretation of PHARAOH'S Dreams. Secondly, the Rise of *Bigotry*, or religious *Intolerance* and *Persecution*. Thirdly, and principally, The Relation which the *Jewish* Institutions bear to the *Egyptian*^f. In all these, the noble Writer hath employed every Art of *Insinuation* and *Address*, that he might throw an Odium on the *Mosaic* Dispensation. These Passages might well merit a particular Consideration, had I not been happily prevented by my most learned Friend, who hath fully exposed their Weakness in that inestimable Treasure of all true Knowledge, *The divine Legation of MOSES*. Thither the Reader is referr'd ; where he will find these Questions treated

^f See *Misc.* ii. c. i.

with

352 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VII. with that *Reach* and *Mastery* so peculiar to the Author of that great Work^s.

IT may now be necessary to examine the third Chapter of the noble Writer's second Miscellany ; where he makes it his Pretence, " to prove the Force of *Humour* in Religion." Of which it may be said, that it is the truest Piece of *Random-Work*, the most genuine *Farce*, that is perhaps to be met with in any Writer of whatever Age or Nation. He *divides* it (as every *Farce* ought to be *divided*) into three *Acts*. In its Progress we are carry'd into a very *Fairy-Land* of *Thought*, if not more properly a *confused Chaos*. For first, he sets about with great Solemnity to prove, " that *Wit* and *Humour* are " corroborative of Religion, and promotive " of true Faith:" To prove this, a Story is told, by which it appears, that *not Wit and Humour*, but *good Humour* or *Easiness of Temper* is thus *corroborative* and *promotive* : Then, in Conclusion, *Wit* and *Humour* come in again, to overturn all that hath been done, and shew that *good Humour* hath suffered itself to be ridiculously *imposed upon*.

^s With Relation to the first of these Points, see the *Div. Leg.* Vol. ii. p. 164. For the second, see *ib.* Book ii. § 6. For the third, see Book iv. § 6. *passim*.

THO'

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 353

SECT.
VII.

THO' it doth not appear that our modern Advocates for *Wit and Humour* are so nearly interested in their Fate as they seem to *think* themselves; yet it must be owned their Generosity is so much the more to be applauded, in thus *pleading* the Cause of *Clients* who *never employed them*. However, taking for granted what seems to be the real Foundation of their Writings on this Subject, "that *talking* in Praise of *Wit and Humour* is a Proof of their being " *possessed* of them, and that consequently " they are *Parties in the Cause*;" I shall not *envy* the noble Writer *any Man's Admiration*, who may think proper to esteem him a *Wit*, on account of the *grotesque* Appearances he assumes throughout this present *Miscellany*. 'Tis my Intention only to convince the plain Reader, that this *supposed Wit* is by no means *Philosophical*.

THE first *Head* therefore, he tells us, is " to make it appear, that *Wit and Humour* " are corroborative of Religion and promotive of true Faith." To this Purpose he tires us with a Story, not the most elegantly plann'd, in my Apprehension, of a " Club " of *merry Gentlemen*, who in a travelling " Expedition meeting with sorry Roads and

A a

" worse

354 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VII. “ worfe Fare, laugh’d themselves into a

“ Belief, that both Roads, Accommodations,
“ and Cookery, were perfectly good.”

What follows is the Moral or Application of this curious Conceit. “ Had I to deal
“ with a malicious Reader, he might per-
“ haps pretend to infer from this Story of
“ my travelling Friends, that I intended
“ to represent it as an easy Matter for Peo-
“ ple to persuade themselves into what
“ Opinion or Belief they pleased.”

Now without troubling ourselves to en-
quire how far this Story is a Proof of the
noble Writer’s fundamental Maxim, “ That
“ Ridicule is a Test of Truth;” let us pro-
ceed to the intended *Moral*; which seems
evidently calculated to throw a false Light
on *religious Belief*; by representing it as the
mere Effect of *Prejudice, Self-Imposition,*
and *Deceit*. To rescue it, therefore, from
this insinuated Calumny, we need not *deny*,
but *insist*, that the Passions, false Interests,
and Prejudices of Mankind must indeed for
ever hang as a Byass upon their Opinions.
But it must be farther observed too, that
these Passions and false Interests will at least
as often prejudice them *against* Religion, as
in its Favour. ’Tis true, there are Preju-
dices

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 355

dices in Favour of Religion, arising from SECT.
VII.
Education; but there are Prejudices against

it too, arising from *vicious Passions*. Some are *sanguine* in their *Hopes*, and hence, while their Conduct is virtuous, *wish*, and therefore *believe* Religion to be *true*: Others are *sanguine* in their *Hopes*, but *abandoned* in their Conduct, and therefore *live* themselves into a Belief that Religion is *false*. Some, thro' a Dread of Annihilation, persuade themselves beyond the Strength of Evidence: Others, thro' the Prevalence of a suspicious cast of Mind, reject even what is probable. Thus Passions and Prejudices work powerfully indeed; but they work both *for* and *against* Religion. It should seem then, that the noble Writer's Moral, which he aims at *Religion*, may with equal Force be apply'd to *Infidelity*: For it is but supposing a Man given up to *Vanity* or *Vice*, and we shall soon "see him enter into such
" a Plot as this against his own Under-
" standing, and endeavour by all possible
" Means to persuade both himself and o-
" thers of what he thinks *convenient* and
" *useful* to DISBELIEVE." 'Tis idle therefore to insist on the Prejudices either *for* or *against* Religion: they will both naturally

356 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VII. arise ; and it is the Part of Reason to controul them. But we may safely leave it to any one's Determination, which Temper of Mind is the most *amiable*, that which entertains Prejudices *in Favour of Religion*, or *against it*.

THE noble Writer proceeds to his *second* Head ; but seems at the same time conscious how little it was to any good Purpose. However, in Failure of *Truth* and *Method*, he again hath recourse to what he seems to think *Wit and Humour* ; and which, for aught I know, may pass for such among his Admirers. “ However, says he, lest I “ should be charged for being worse than “ my Word, I shall endeavour to satisfy my “ Reader, by pursuing my Method proposed ; if peradventure he can call to “ Mind what that Method was. Or if he “ cannot, the Matter is not so very important, but that he may safely pursue his “ Reading, without further Trouble.”

BUT tho' it was prudently done in the noble Writer, to throw the Subject of his *second* Head into *Shades* ; yet for the Sake of Truth, we must drag it into *Light*. It was therefore to prove “ That *Wit and Humour* are used as the proper Means of “ pro-

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 357

“ promoting true Faith, by the holy Foun-^{SECT.}
“ ders of Religion.” But when we come ^{VII.}
to the Point, for *Wit and Humour*, by Vir-
tue of a certain Dexterity of Hand, the
Reader is again unexpectedly presented
with *good Humour* in their Stead. This,
it will be said, is nimble dealing; but what
of that, so long as it may tend to disgrace
Christianity and its *Founder*? The noble
Writer’s Application, therefore, is still more
Extraordinary. “ The Affection and Love
“ which procures a true Adherence to the
“ new religious Foundation, must depend
“ either on a real or *counterfeit Goodness* in
“ the *religious Founder*: Whatever *ambitious*
“ *Spirit* may *inspire him*; whatever *savage*
“ *Zeal* or *persecuting Principle* may lie in
“ *Reserve*, ready to disclose itself when Au-
“ thority and Power is once obtained; the
“ *first Scene of Doctrine*, however, fails not
“ to present us with the agreeable Views
“ of *Joy, Love, Meakness, Gentleness*, and
“ *Moderation*.”—To speak my inmost Sen-
timents of this Passage, it is of too black a
Nature to deserve a Reply. There are
certain Degrees of *Calumny* so *flagrant*, as
injured Truth disdains to answer; and this
is of the Kind. On this Occasion, there-

358 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VII.

fore, we shall leave the noble Writer to the Reflections of every *honest Man*; in Conformity to the Example of that blessed Person, “*who, when he was reviled, reviled not again^h.*”

THE next Circumstance in holy Writ, that falls under his Lordship's Animadversion, is what he calls “The famous *Entry* “or *high Dance* perform'd by DAVID in “the Procession of the sacred Coffer.” In which he hath again represented Things *as it seemed good to him*. Here, by confounding *ancient*, with *modern Manners* (in such a Way as is quite unworthy of his Character, and suited only to the Genius of a *Coffee-house* Freethinker) he hath endeavoured to bring down the *solemn Procession* of a grand *religious Festival*, to a Level with the Merriments of an *Apish Dancing-Master*. This Representation may very probably pass current among many of his Admirers; so that it had been necessary to set the Matter in its true Light; but that here too, I am happily prevented by a judicious Writer, who hath done all imaginable Justice to the Argument; and effectually ex-

^h See above § 3. of this *Essay*. p. 269.

posed

posed the noble Writer's Weakness and In-
sincerity¹.

SECT.
VII.

HIS Lordship now proceeds to the Story of the Prophet JONAH, which he hath burlesqued and turned to Farce with that Delicacy, so peculiar to himself. The Story itself is indeed authenticated by our SAVIOUR's mention of it, as emblematical of his own Death and Resurrection. Its Moral is excellent; being an illustrious Display of the divine Mercy to penitent and returning Sinners, exemplify'd in GOD's remitting the Punishment denounced, and sparing a devoted City on its sincere Repentance; as also of the Frailty and Imperfection of the best of Men, set forth in the Prophet's Behaviour on the Occasion. To this we may add "the Propriety of the Miracle recorded," which was itself an extraordinary and most awakening "Instance of Punishment inflicted on Disobedience, and remitted on Repentance;" and therefore bearing a strong Relation to the Event for which it was wrought; being peculiarly adapted, when made known to the Ninevites, to in-

¹ See Dr. Leland's *Answer to the Moral Philosopher*, p. 291, &c.

360 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VII. duce them to hearken to the Prophet's Preaching, to *believe* what he *denounced* and *promised*, and rouse them at once into a *Fear* of God's *Justice*, and a *Reliance* on his *Mercy*.

SUCH then being the real Nature of the Fact; the Secret of the noble Writer's polite Representation lies in his burlesquing the Circumstances of the *supposed Dialogue* between God and the Prophet; an easy Task for any one who is disingenuous or ignorant enough to represent as strictly *litteral*, what is evidently *parabolical*; according to the frequent and known Manner of *Composition* in the earliest Ages^k. This his Lordship seems to have been aware of: "Whatsoever of this Kind may be *allego-*
" *rically* understood, or in the Way of *Pa-*
" *rable* or *Fable*, &c." Now had he treated the Scripture Story with the same Candour which he affords to other ancient Writers, he would not have abused this Passage in so unworthy a Manner. A Writer of no Abilities, if provided only with a sufficient Quantity of Spleen and false Con-

^k See the *Div. Leg.* Vol. ii. where a full Account is given of the Origin and Progress of this kind of Writing.

ceit,

ceit, might easily ridicule his favourite Piece, SECT.

“The Judgment of HERCULES:” And to VII.
a raw Imagination, disgrace that instructive
Fable, by burlesquing the supposed Conference
between the *Goddeses* and the *Heroe*.
VIRGIL hath in Fact been so served. And
if Works of mere Invention, and of the heroic
Kind, studiously contrived to avoid
every thing low, obscure, or equivocal, are
subject to this Abuse; can we wonder, if
the succinct History of an ancient Fact,
recording the Dispensations of Providence,
a Matter very obscure in itself, and relative
to ancient Manners so distant from our own,
should be liable to the false and dishonest
Lights of Buffoonry? We may further observe
that the noble Writer’s Ridicule sometimes
falls on divine Providence itself: “His
“*Tutor had good Eyes, and a long Reach;*
“he *overtook* the Renegade at Sea, &c.”—
Could an *Epicurean* have used more indecent
Language?

HIS Lordship goes on, to ridicule “the
“*Descriptions, Narrations, Expressions, and*
“*Phrases*” of holy Scripture: But these we
shall pass over at present, as they will deserve
a separate Consideration. He touches
once more on the *Patriarch ABRAHAM*;
and

362 *Onrevealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VII. and they who are curious enough to look for the Objection, may find a full Answer to it, in the Place here referred to ¹.

THE next, and only remaining Circumstance worthy of Notice in this Miscellany, is a *pretended Translation* from PLUTARCH: In which the noble Writer deals as honourably by that Author, as before by GORGIAS or ARISTOTLE ^m. But here too, I am prevented by the learned PHILELEUTHERUS LIPSIENSIS: However, as his Lordship's Conduct is *remarkable* on this Occasion, it may not be improper to exhibit a View of it in the great Critic's Words; who, it must be owed, hath chastised the noble Writer somewhat *roughly*, and *Aristarchus-like*.

“ HE (Mr. COLLINS) quotes the Place
“ as it is translated forsooth in the *Cha-*
“ *raacteristics*, a Book writ by an anony-
“ mous, but, whoever he is, a very whim-
“ fical and conceited Author. *O wretched*
“ Grecians (*so that Author renders PLU-*
“ TARCH) *who bring into Religion that*
“ *frightful Mien of sordid and vilifying*
“ *Devotion, ill-favoured Humiliation and*

¹ *Div. Leg.* Vol. ii. p. 620.
Essay i. § ix.

^m See above,

“ *Con-*

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 363

“ *Contrition, abject Looks and Countenances,* SECT.
VII.

“ *Consternations, Prostrations, Disfigura-*

“ *tions, and, in the Act of worship, Distor-*

“ *tions, constrained and painful Postures of*

“ *the Body, wry Faces, beggarly Tones,*

“ *Mumpings, Grimaces, Cringings, and the*

“ *rest of this Kind. — Thus far that name-*

“ *less Opiniatre: And our worthy Writer*

“ *(Mr. COLLINS) introduces it with a grave*

“ *Air, that PLUTARCH thus satirizes the*

“ *public Forms of Devotion; which yet are*

“ *such, as, in almost all Countries, pass for*

“ *the true Worship of God. — This would*

“ *partly be true, if those were really the*

“ *Words of PLUTARCH: But as not one*

“ *Syllable of them is found there, what*

“ *must we think of this Couple of Corrup-*

“ *ters and Forgers? There is nothing in all*

“ *this, but their own Disfigurations and*

“ *Distortions of the Original; their own*

“ *Mumpings, and beggarly Tones, while*

“ *they pretend to speak in PLUTARCH’S*

“ *Voice. — PLUTARCH having observed,*

“ *that Superstition alone allows no Ease*

“ *nor Intermiſſion, even in Sleep; their*

“ *Dreams, adds he, do as much torment*

“ *them then, as their waking Thoughts did*

“ *before; they seek for Expiations of those*

“ *Visions*

364 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. " *Visions nocturnal; Charms, Sulfurations,*
 VII. " *Dippings in the Sea, Sittings all Day on*
 " *the Ground.*

" O Greeks, *Inventors of Barbarian Ills,*
 " *whose Superstition has devised Rowlings*
 " *in the Mire and in the Kennels, Dippings*
 " *in the Sea, Grovelings and Throwings*
 " *upon the Face, deformed Sittings on the*
 " *Earth, absurd and uncouth Adorations.*
 " This is a verbal Interpretation of that
 " Place — and now I dare ask the Reader,
 " if he has seen a more flagrant Instance of
 " *Unfaithfulness and Forgery*, than this of
 " our two Writers? *Humiliation and Con-*
 " *trition*, known Words in your *English*
 " *Liturgy*, are to be traduced here under
 " PLUTARCH'S Name. Where do those
 " and their other Phrases appear in the
 " Original? or where do the Rites, he
 " really speaks of, appear in your Form of
 " Worship? who among you *rowl them-*
 " *selves in Mire, or wallow in Kennels?* a
 " Ceremony fit only to be enjoined to such
 " *crackbrained and scandalous Writers* n."

THE remaining Part of this random
 Essay, is so completely vague and unintel-
 ligible, that although it be evidently de-

ⁿ *Phil. Lipsiens. p. 210 &c.*

signed,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 365

signed, as a continued Sneer at *Christianity*. SECT.
VII.

'tis impossible to pick so much as an *Objection*, or even an *Idea* out of it. 'Tis therefore below Criticism. To conclude; when I see the noble Writer debase himself in this strange Manner, exercising at once the *lowest Derision*, and inflicting the *deadliest Wounds on Religion and Christianity*; I must own, the Appearance he makes, call up to my Imagination a Remark of his own, "That there cannot be a Sight more shocking and contemptible, than that of a Man acting at once the Part of a *Merry-Andrew*, and an *Executioner* °."

It may be necessary, finally, to obviate his Lordship's perpetual Sneer at the *Mysteries* of our Religion. These, when particular Topics fail him, are the standing Objects of his Raillery. To cite particular Passages of this Kind, were needless, because they are innumerable. The plain Implication of all his gross Banter, is, "That because in the *Christian Dispensation*, there are some things, which surpass human Comprehension, *Christianity* is therefore *absurd* and *ridiculous*."

With Regard to this Cavil, therefore,

° *Wit. and H. Part i. § iii.*

'tis

366 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. 'tis not my Intention to insist on proving the
VII. " Difference between Things being *above*
" Reason and Things being *contrary* to Reason;
" or that Propositions may be true,
" though they are *above* our Reason, so
" long as they are not *contrary* to it." Full
enough has been said on this Subject, and
by no body better than by the excellent
Mr. Boyle. 'Tis a Question of more Importance
to decide, " Why any thing *mysterious*
" should be admitted into a Religion,
" *revealed* for the Use of Man?" And in
Answer to this, we need only observe, that
revealed Religion being designed for Man's
Use, its *essential* Doctrines are plain, *intelligible*
to all, *accommodated* to the Nature and
Faculties of the *human* Kind. But as this
System not only reveals to us our *Duty*, but
all *Motives* too which may induce us to
practise it; so, in Order to *inforce these*, and
convince us of the *Truth* of their divine
Original, it was necessary, that a *History of Providence*,
or God's *Dispensation*, should be
revealed along with them. Hence something
mysterious must needs arise; unless you
suppose Man *infinite* in Knowledge. For as
this System reveals to us several Particulars
(so far as they stand connected with *Piety*
and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 367

and *Morals*) which relate to the Nature of SECT.
God, the State of other, and superior Be- VII.
ings, the original Condition of Man, the In-
terposition of Providence for his Redemp-
tion, the Change of his Nature and Facul-
ties, through the future Periods of his Exis-
tence; in all which Circumstances, his pre-
sent Reach of Thought could give him no
Information; 'tis evident, that in these Ac-
counts, many Subjects must be *touched upon*,
and *other Systems of Being* occasionally
glanced at, the full Knowledge of which,
must be far beyond his present Compre-
hension. Now so far as these Truths and
Facts, though *imperfectly revealed*, have
any Tendency to *enlighten* his Mind, as to
the general *Plan of Providence*, or stand
connected in any other Manner with *Reli-*
gion and Virtue, so as to *encourage* and *pro-*
mote them, they must surely be admitted as
Circumstances of great *Propriety* and *Use*.
Or even supposing some of them to be of
none, yet if they stand so essentially *connect-*
ed with others *which are*, so that the one
cannot be destroyed without the other;
this very Circumstance of *essential Union*,
effectually destroys every Objection against
their being of divine Original.

368 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VII.

There may be, likewise, and undoubtedly are some few Mysteries of another Kind in the *Mosaic* Dispensation: Such, I mean, as may seem, to some Apprehensions, not so easily reconcileable to the *moral* Attributes of GOD: Of which Kind there are *some* too, in the Constitution of the natural World. Now here in *Revelation*, as in *Nature*, 'tis the Part of human Reason to acquiesce in this *mysterious* and *unknown* Part, from what is *clear* and *known*^p. Of this Kind, perhaps, is the Expulsion of the *Canaanites* under *Joshua*, which the noble Writer hath taken such Pains to vilify^q. He might with as much Reason insult the Creator, for the Admission of *Storm*, *Famine*, or *Pestilence*. For as in *Nature*, so in *revealed* Religion, we are not to judge of the *whole* Constitution or Dispensation of Things, from *small* and *seeming* Exceptions: On the Contrary, 'tis the Part of Wisdom to determine concerning these *seeming* Exceptions from a full View of the *whole* Dispensation. If *this* evidently tend to Good, the unprejudiced Enquirer into *Nature* and *Revelation* attributes the Doubt and Dark-

^p See above, § iv. of this *Essay*.
P. iii. § iii.

^q *Advice*,
ness,

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 369

ness, which may involve any particular SECT. VII.
Part, to his own *Incapacity* and *Ignorance*.

And justly; for as the noble Writer hath told us on this very Occasion, “ In an *In-*
“ *finit*y of Things thus *relative*, a Mind,
“ which sees not *infinitely*, can see nothing
“ *fully* ^r.

LET us therefore, while as yet we see but
as through a Glass and darkly, contemplate
the Works of God with Reverence and Sub-
mission. Let us wait the happier Hour,
when *we shall know even as we are known* :
when we shall be raised to a more enlarged
Comprehension of our Creator’s immense
Designs; and the whole intelligent Crea-
tion shall joyn, in confessing and adoring
the unerring Rectitude of all his Dispen-
sations.

SECTION VIII.

HITHERTO we have seen the SECT. VIII.
noble Writer buffooning and disgracing
Christianity, from a false Representation of
its *material* Part: we shall now consider
what he hath thrown out against the *Com-*
position, *Style*, and *Manner* of the sacred

^r *Mor.* Part ii. § iv.

B b

Scriptures;

370 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. VIII. Scriptures; for on this too, he has thought
it expedient to *point* his *Raillery*.

He tells us, in the *ironical Tone*, “ that
“ the Scriptural Descriptions, Narrations,
“ Expressions, and Phrases, are in them-
“ selves many Times exceedingly pleasant,
“ entertaining, and facetious. — That
“ our Saviour’s Style, — his Parables, Si-
“ milies, Comparisons, — his Exhortations
“ to his Disciples, the Images under which
“ he often couches his Morals and pruden-
“ tial Rules — carry with them a certain
“ *Festivity, Alacrity*, and good Humour
“ so remarkable, that I should look upon
“ it as impossible not to be mov’d in a *plea-*
“ *sant Manner* at their Recital’s.” To
these general Cavils he hath added a *Simile*
in another Miscellany, which, as is usual
with all fanciful Writers, is to stand for an
Argument. He says “ ’tis no otherwise
“ in the grammatical Art of Characters, and
“ *painted Speech*, than in the Art of *Paint-*
“ *ing* itself. I have seen, in certain Chris-
“ tian Churches, an ancient Piece or two,
“ affirm’d on the solemn Faith of priestly
“ Tradition, to have been angelically and
“ divinely wrought, by a supernatural

• *Misc. ii. c. 3.*

“ Hand

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 37 I

“ Hand and sacred Pencil. Had the Piece SECT. VIII.
“ happen'd to be of a Hand like RAPHA-
“ EL's, I could have found nothing *cer-*
“ *tain* to oppose to this Tradition. But
“ having observed the whole *Style* and
“ *Manner* of the pretended heavenly Work-
“ manship to be so indifferent, as to vary
“ in many Particulars from the Truth of
“ Art, I presum'd within myself to beg
“ Pardon of the Tradition, and assert con-
“ fidently, that, if the Pencil had been
“ *Heaven-guided*, it could never have been
“ so *lame* in it's Performance^t.” This in-
genious Conceit, in the subsequent Para-
graph, he very *clearly*, tho' *slyly*, applies to
the holy Scriptures.

'Tis the Province of *Wit* to form *Com-*
parisons; of *Philosophy*, to *detect* their *Weak-*
ness, when they are obtruded on us as a
Test of Truth. On Examination therefore
I will venture to say, the noble Writer's
Parallel will be found highly irregular and
defective.

FOR there is an *essential* Difference be-
tween *Paintings* and *Writing*, both in their
End and *Execution*. Paintings, with Re-
gard to their End, are things of mere *A-*

^t *Misc. v. c. 1.*

372 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. *musement and Taste*: Consequently all their
 VIII. Value lies in the *Exquisiteness* of the *Art*,
 and the *fine Hand* of the Master. 'Tis
 likewise a Species of Art, that lies chiefly
 among the *Few*; the Bulk of Mankind (or
 in the noble Writer's more elegant Phrase,
the mere Vulgar) being *incapable*, thro' a
 Want of *Leisure*, of gaining any Proficiency
 in this *Taste*; or of acquiring that curious
 Discernment in *Ordonnance*, *Drawing*, and
Colouring, which is at once the Pride and
 Pleasure of the *Virtuoso-Tribe*.

BUT with Respect to Language the Af-
 fair is otherwise: It's *Ends* are *various*.
 From the Four different Kinds of literary
 Composition, as explained above^u, there
 must arise a correspondent Variety of Style,
 the *Poetical*, the *Oratorial*, the *Historical*
 and *Didactic*. The First of these Kinds
 alone partakes of the Nature of *Picture*, and
 therefore can alone be properly compared
 with it; as they are both referr'd to the
Imagination, for the End of *Pleasure*: The
 other three Species of Composition, tend-
 ing chiefly to *Utility*, by the Means of
Persuasion or *Instruction*, draw their prime
 Value from *Plainness*, *Clearness*, and *Pre-*

^u See *Essay*, i. § 3.

cision:

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 373

cision: From being adapted, not to the ^{SECT.}
Taste of the *fastidious Critic*, but to the Ca- ^{VIII.}
pacities of those who are the intended Ob-
jects of *Perswasion* or *Instruction*. Here
then, the noble Writer's Parallel is essenti-
ally defective: Since it was the Intention of
Providence, in the sacred Scriptures, to
condescend to what his Lordship's Quality
and refined Wisdom intitle him to disdain,
even to *instruct the mere Vulgar*: Whereas
the End of *Painting*, is only *the Amusement*
of the Few.

IN REGARD to the *Execution*, we shall
find as wide a Difference. There is, in
Philosophical strictness, but one *unvary'd*
Language or *Style* in *Painting*; which is
“such a Modification of *Light* or *Colours* as
“may imitate whatever Objects we find in
“Nature.” This consists not in the *Ap-*
plication of *arbitrary Signs*; but hath it's
Foundation in the *Senses* and *Reason* of
Mankind; and is therefore *the same* in eve-
ry Age and Nation. But in the literary *Style*
or *Language*, the Matter is far otherwise,
For Language being the *voluntary* Appli-
cation of *arbitrary Signs*, according to the
Consent of different Men and Nations, there
is no *single uniform Model of Nature* to be

374 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VIII.

followed. Hence *Gracefulness* or *Strength* of Style, *Harmony* or *Softness*, *copious* Expression, *terse* Brevity, or *contrasted* Periods, have by turns gained the Approbation of particular Countries. Now all these *supposed* Beauties of Speech are *relative*, *local*, and *capricious*; and consequently unworthy the Imitation of a divine Artist; who, to fit the Speech he *ordains*, to the great Work of *universal Instruction*, would, we may reasonably suppose, strip it of every *local*, *peculiar*, and *grotesque* Ornament; and convey it unaccompany'd by all, but the more *universal* Qualities common to every Tongue.

THE noble Writer, then, might with some shew of Reason have objected to the *Style* of Scripture, had the Writers boasted it's *Elegance*, as MAHOMET did that of his *Koran*, and defy'd all his Opposers to write any thing approaching it in this Respect. But the sacred Penmen discover no *Design* or *Desire* of excelling as *fine* Writers: On the contrary, St. PAUL says, "they came not with the Power of human Speech," and gives a Reason for it which does Honour to his Mission.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 375

THO' this Scrutiny alone might be sufficient to detect and discredit the Wantonness of the noble Writer's Comparison; yet it will further lead us to a full Disclosure of the Truth; by shewing *that* to be the peculiar Characteristic of the Scripture Composition, which hath ever held the first Rank among the Qualities of human Writings; I mean, that of *unadorned* SIMPLICITY.

SECT.
VIII.

As much hath been said by many Writers on the Subject of *Simplicity*, with very little Precision; and particularly by the noble Writer, who seems to separate the *simple* Manner from the *Sublime*, as if they were *incompatible*^x; and indeed in his own Compositions preposterously deserts the *one*, when ever he attempts the *other*^y: It may be necessary here to fix the Idea of a *just* SIMPLICITY. This may be said to consist "in *Truth* and *Weight* of SENTIMENT, "cloathed in such IMAGES and STYLE, as "may most effectually convey it to the Reader's Mind." If any of these Circumstances be wanting; if the SENTIMENT be *false* or *trifling*, if the IMAGES or STYLE be such as tend rather to *fix the Attention on*

^x *Advice*, Part ii. § 2.
passim.

^y See the *Moralists*,

them-

376 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VIII.

themselves, than on the *Sentiment* they are employed to convey, the *just Simplicity* is destroyed. This, as might be proved by a large Induction of Particulars, is the Circumstance in which the best Critics of Antiquity placed the supreme Excellence of Writing. And, in this Use of the Term, it appears, that not only the *familiar*, the *narrative*, the *didactic*, but the *pathetic*, and *sublime* Manner too, are so far from being inconsistent with *Simplicity*, that they are then only in their Perfection, when founded on it.

'Tis true indeed, that the sacred Records are, as the noble Writer calls them, “*multifarious*, and of different Characters, “varying according to the Situation, Intention, and natural Capacity of the Writers².” Yet amidst all this Variety of Manner, the reigning Quality of *Simplicity* is so *uniform* and *conspicuous*, that the boldest Enemy of *Christianity* will not be forward to hazard the Credit of his *Taste*, by calling it in Question.

If we examine them in this Light, we shall find, that, according to the Division made above^a, they consist of Four different Kinds, the *poetic*, *oratorical*, *historical*,

² *Misc.* v. c. 1.

^a *Essays* i. § 3.

and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 377

and *didactic* Forms. The poetic lies chiefly in the Book of *Psalms*, of *Job*, and several detached Passages in the *Prophets*, particularly of *Isaiah*. They contain many noble Efforts of *unmixed Poetry* or *pure Imitation*; yet *these*, being all centered in *one Intention*, that of *extolling* the Works, and celebrating the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of the *Deity*, do generally partake of the Character of *Eloquence*, being chiefly of the *lyric* Kind ^b. In all these, the great Character of *Simplicity* is so strongly predominant, that every Attempt to *embellish* them, by adding the supernumerary Decorations of *Style* in *Translation*, hath ever been found to *weaken* and *debase* them.

As to the *oratorical* or *pathetic* Parts, innumerable might be produced, equal if not superior to any recorded by prophane Antiquity. In these, the leading Character of *Simplicity* is no less remarkable. Our SAVIOUR'S *Parables* and Exhortations are generally admirable in this Quality: Filled with unfeigned Compassion for the Weakness and Miseries of Man, they breathe nothing but the purest Benevolence. St. PAUL'S last Conversation with his Friends

^b See *Essay* i. § 3.

378 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. at *Ephesus*, on his Departure for *Jerusalem*^c; his Discourses on the *Resurrection* and on *Charity*; his Reproofs, his Commendations, his Apologies, especially that before AGRIPPA^d, are wrote in the noblest Strain of Simplicity. And as a perfect Model of this Kind, we may give the Story of JOSEPH and his Brethren, which for Tenderness, true *Pathos*, and unmixed Simplicity, is beyond Compare superior to any thing that appears in ancient Story.

BUT as the most important Part of Scripture lies in the *historical* and *preceptive* Part; especially in the *new Testament*, whence chiefly our Idea of *Duty* must be drawn; so we find this uniform and *simple* Manner eminently prevailing throughout, in every *Precept* and *Narration*. The History is conveyed in that artless Strain which alone could *adapt* it to the *Capacities* of all *Mankind*; the Precepts delivered by our SAVIOUR are drawn from the Principles of *common Sense*, improved by the most exalted Love of God and *Man*; and either expressed in clear and direct Terms, or couched under such *Images* and *Allusions*, as are every where to be found in *Nature*, such as are,

^c *Acts*, c. xx.

^d *Ib.* c. xxvi.

and

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 379

and must ever be universally known, and fa-^{SECT.}
miliar to all Mankind^e; in which, we may ^{VIII.}

further observe, his Manner of teaching was greatly superior even to the noble Writer's justly applauded SOCRATES, who for the most part drew his *Images* and Allusions from the *less known* ARTS and MANNERS of the *City*, tho' indeed not without Reason. He did not aim at the Instruction of Mankind, but of the more literate Part of his fellow Citizens. His proper End was rather reforming the Minds of those who had been ill taught, than instructing those who had never learnt. To return; thro' all this Variety of striking Allusion and moral Precept, the *Style* ever continues the same, *unadorned, simple*, and, even by the noble Writer's own Confession, "*vehement* and *majestic*^f;" yet never drawing the Reader's Attention on itself, but on the divine *Sentiments* it conveys.

To this we may further add, that these several Kinds of Composition are mixed and united with such Propriety and Force, as is scarce to be equalled in any other Writings.

^e See Newton on *Daniel*; — Mr. Jortin's *Discourses*; — Dr. Law's *Life of CHRIST*.

^f *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

380 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VIII.

The poetical Parts are heightened by the great Strokes of *Eloquence* and *Precept*; the *pathetick*, by the noblest *Imagery*, and justest *Morals*; and the *preceptive* is strengthened and inforced by all the Aids of *Poetry*, *Eloquence*, and *Parable*; calculated at once to engage the *Imagination*, to touch the *Passions*, and command the *Reason* of Mankind.

'Tis true, this unadorned *Simplicity* so conspicuous in the Scripture Composition, hath often given Offence to puerile Critics. The noble Writer hath but revived the Objection; it was weakly urged by CELsus in the Infancy of the Christian Religion^s. At the Period when *Letters* revived in *Europe*, the *florid* Taste was so prevalent in *Italy*, under the Pontificate of LEO the Tenth, that the Composition of the Scriptures was on this Account held in general Contempt; and one of the fine Gentlemen in Literature^h, of those Days, is known to have declared, "that he dared not to read the *Bible*, lest it should endanger his *Style*." We may easily form a Judgment of the Taste of that Age from

^s Origen *contra Cels.* l. vii.

^h Cardinal PIETRO BEMBO.

this

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 381

this one Circumstance, "that their most SECT. VIII.
"elaborate and celebrated Compositions
"were all wrote in a *dead Language*:" For
thus they became mere *Imitators*, even to a
Degree of *Servility*. And 'tis sufficient for
the Defenders of the *Bible* to observe, that
along with *it*, every other great Model of
antient Writing fell into the same Disgrace
at the above-mentioned Period; while the
general Taste and Attention was turned
from weight of *Sentiment*, and strength of
Image and *Expression*, to the *local* and *capricious*
Decorations of *Style* and *Language*.
But the Reign of this false Taste was of
short Duration; so that for a long Time
past, the comparative Merit of ancient
Writers hath been *weighed* in a juster *Scale*.

Now if we examine the Writers whose
Composition hath stood the Test of Ages,
and obtained that highest Honour, "the
"concurrent Approbation of distant Times
"and Nations," we shall find that the Cha-
racter of *Simplicity* is the *unvarying* Cir-
cumstance, which alone hath been able to
gain this universal Homage from Mankind.
Among the *Greeks*, whose Writers in gene-
ral are of the *simple* Kind, the divinest Poetⁱ,

ⁱ Homer.

the

382 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. the most commanding *Orator*^k, the finest
 VIII. *Historian*^l, and deepest *Philosopher*^m, are,
 above the rest, conspicuously eminent in
 this great Quality. The *Roman* Writers
 rise towards Perfection according to that
 Measure of true *Simplicity* which they min-
 gle in their Works. Indeed they are all
 inferior to the *Greek* Models. But who
 will deny, that LUCRETIVS, HORACE,
 VIRGIL, LIVY, TERENCE, TULLY, are
 at once the *simplest* and *best* of *Roman* Wri-
 ters? Unless we add the noble *Annalist*ⁿ,
 who appeared in after Times; who, not-
 withstanding the *political Turn* of his Ge-
 nius, which sometimes *interferes*, is admira-
 ble in this great Quality; and by it, far su-
 perior to his Contemporaries. 'Tis this
 one Circumstance that hath raised the ve-
 nerable DANTE, the Father of modern Poe-
 try, above the succeeding Poets of his
 Country, who could never long maintain
 the *local* and *temporary* Honours bestowed
 upon them; but have fallen under that just
 Neglect, which *Time* will ever decree to
 those who desert a *just Simplicity* for the
florid Colourings of Style, contrasted Phra-

^k Demosthenes.

^l Xenophon.

^m Aristotle.

ⁿ Tacitus.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 383

ses, affected Conceits, the mere *Trappings* SECT. VIII.
of Composition, and *Gothic MINUTIÆ*.

'Tis this hath given to BOILEAU the most lasting Wreath in *France*; to SHAKESPEAR and MILTON in *England*; especially to the last, whose Writings are more *unmixed* in in this Respect; and who had formed himself entirely on the *simple* Model of the best *Greek* Writers, and the *sacred* Scriptures.

° Mr. DRYDEN somewhere observes “ that MILTON never sinks so far below himself, as when he falls on *some Track of Scripture*.” 'Tis equally true, that he never *rises* so far above himself, as when he falls on *some Track of Scripture*. 'Tis easy to guess what was the Drift of Mr. DRYDEN's Remark. But the Observations made above (*Essay* i. § 3) will easily reconcile these seeming Contradictions. When MILTON adopts the *poetical* Parts of Scripture, he *rises* above himself. But by an *injudicious Application* of the *historical* or *didactic* Parts, he *often falls indeed*.

THIS naturally leads us to an Observation on Mr. HUME's *Essay* “ on *Simplicity and Refinement in Writing*.” He hath attempted to fix a certain *Union* of these two Qualities, which, he says, constitutes the most perfect Form of Composition. It were to be wished he had given us some better *Reasons* in support of this *Opinion*, which itself seems to be a mere *Refinement*. The Progress of his Argument is remarkable. — He draws all his Instances from *Poets*; and having given some Examples of Poets who are both *simple* and *unpoetical* in the Extreme, he arbitrarily throws the Censure on the too great Degree of *Simplicity*, instead of fixing it where he ought, *viz.* on the too great Mixture of the *historical*, *oratorical*, or *argumentative* Species. In Proof of this, we need only alledge the

As

384 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VIII.

As it appears from these Instances, that *Simplicity* is the only universal Characteristic of just Writing; so the superior Eminence of the sacred Scriptures in this prime Quality hath been generally acknowledged. One of the greatest Critics in Antiquity, himself conspicuous in the *sublime* and *simple* Manner, hath born this Testimony to the Writings of MOSES and St. PAUL". And by Parity of Reason we must conclude, that had he been conversant with the other sacred Writers, his *Taste* and *Candour* would have allowed them the same Encomium.

Examples of HOMER, PINDAR, and CALLIMACHUS, where *Simplicity*, and at the same Time *Sublimity* and the *true poetic Forms*, are in their last *Perfection*. Thus all he proves is, "that a *Poet* ought not to be " *unpoetical*."—Next, he puts VIRGIL and RACINE on a *Level*, as having attained the nearest to this *imagined Union* of *Simplicity* and *Refinement*. Here he obligeth us again to call his *Taste* in Question: For every Page of RACINE is full of *Turns*, both of *Phrase* and *Sentiment*: Whereas we scarce meet with three Instances of this Kind in all VIRGIL's Writings.—He then gives us his Idea of *Simplicity*: "Those Compositions which have the Recommendation of *Simplicity*, have *nothing surprizing* in the Thought, " when divested of that *Elegance of Expression*, and " *Harmony of Numbers*, with which it is cloathed."—From these extraordinary *Premises*, we are naturally prepared to expect his *Conclusion*, "that CATULLUS " and PARNEL are his *favourite Authors*!"

P Longinus.

BUT

BUT we need not have Recourse to Authorities, for the Proof of the superior Weight and Dignity of the sacred Scriptures, in this great Quality. 'Tis evident to Demonstration from the following Circumstance. It hath been often observed, even by Writers of no mean Rank, that "the Scriptures suffer in their Credit by "the *Disadvantage* of a *literal Version*, "while other ancient Writings enjoy the " *Advantage* of a *free and embellished Trans-* " *lation.*" But in Reality these Gentlemen's Concern is ill-placed and groundless. For the Truth is, "That most other Writings are indeed *impaired* by a *literal Trans-* " *lation*; whereas, giving only a due Regard to the *Idioms* of different Languages, "the sacred Writings when *literally trans-* " *lated*, are then in their full Perfection." Now this is an *internal* Proof, that in all other Writings there is a Mixture of *local, relative, exterior* Ornament; which is often lost in the Transfusion from one Language to another. But the *internal* Beauties which depend not on the *particular* Construction of *Tongues*, no *Change* of *Tongue* can destroy. Hence the *Bible-Composition* preserves its native Beauty and Strength,

386 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
VIII.

alike in every Language, by the sole Energy of unadorned Phrase, natural Images, weight of Sentiment, and *great Simplicity*.

'Tis in this Respect, like a rich Vein of *Gold*, which, under the severest Trials of Heat, Cold, and Moisture, retains its original *Weight* and *Splendor*, without either Loss or Alloy; while baser Metals are corrupted by Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and assimilated to the various Elements thro' which they pass.

THIS Circumstance then may be justly regarded as sufficient to vindicate the Composition of the sacred Scriptures; as it is at once their chief *Excellence*, and greatest *Security*. 'Tis their *Excellence*, as it renders them *intelligible* and *useful to all*; 'tis their *Security*, as it prevents their being disguised by the *false* and *capricious* Ornaments of *vain* or *weak Translators*.

WE may safely appeal to Experience and Fact for the Confirmation of these Remarks on the superior Simplicity, Utility, and Excellence of the Style of holy Scripture. Is there any Book in the World, so perfectly adapted to all Capacities? that contains such *sublime* and *exalting* Precepts, convey'd

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 387

in such an *artless* and *intelligible* Strain? that can be read with such Pleasure and Advantage, by the lettered *Sage* and the unlettered *Peasant*? To whom then would the noble Writer send Mankind for religious and moral Instruction? To the divine PLATO, it may be supposed; or, more probably, to the *inraptured* Strains of PHILOCLES and THEOCLES. And sure, Mankind must reap much Instruction and Advantage from the *puffed Epithets* and *fustian Style* of a *philosophical Romance*. We may reasonably hope indeed, soon to see (nay, do we not already see?) the happy Effects of this high Discipline. For in Fact, the noble Writer's *Characteristics* are now the standing *Oracle* in the *Office*, the *Shop*, nay, as I am informed, sometimes even in the *Cobler's Stall*. We need not wonder therefore, that in these new Habitations of *Taste*, *sublimed Phrase*, and *abstruse Philosophy*, the *simple* Strains of the Gospel are *damned* and *discarded*.

To return then to the noble Writer's Comparison (if indeed we have departed from it) these united Observations may convince us, that the only circumstance in Painting, which can with any Propriety be compared to literary *Style*, is that of

388 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT
VIII.

colouring. And on this principle we may farther confirm all that hath been said on the superior Excellence of the *simple* Manner. For 'tis well known, and the noble Writer knew it, that while the Masters in this fine Art confined the Pencil to the genuine Forms of *Grace* and *Greatness*, and only superadded to these the temperate Embellishments of a *chastised* and *modest* colouring, the Art grew towards its *Perfection*: but no sooner was their Attention turned from *Truth*, *Simplicity*, and *Design*, to the gaudy Decorations of a rich and luscious *Colouring*, than their Credit declined with their Art: and the experienced Eye, which contemplates the *old* Pictures with *Admiration*, surveys the *modern* with *Indifference* or *Contempt*.

To conclude. We see there are two Kinds of *Composition*, essentially opposed to each other. The *one* turns the Attention on *itself*; the *other*, on *the Truths it conveys*. The first may be justly compared to a *Sun-Beam* playing on the *Surface* of the Water, which *attracts* and *dazzles* the Beholder's Eye by its own *useless Splendor*. The last is like a *Sun-Beam* darting to the Bottom; which, while itself is *unseen*, or *unobserved*,

unobserved, communicates its brightness, and SECT.
VIII.
illuminates every Object on which it falls.

How far the *first* of these may belong to the noble Writer, let others determine. 'Tis sufficient to have proved, that the *last* is the *unvaried* Style and Manner of the *sacred Scriptures*.

S E C T I O N IX.

IT would have been strange, had his SECT.
IX.
Lordship emptied so much of his Gall on *Christianity*, without bestowing a Share on its *Ministers*. It may therefore be expected, that something should be said on his Treatment of the *English Clergy*.

So far as his Spirit of Satire may have been provoked by the persecuting and intolerant Principles of some of the *Clergy* in his Time, 'tis highly commendable. It matters not in what Rank, Order, or Profession, the Enemies of *Freedom* may appear. What shape or Pretence soever they may assume, 'tis a work of true Charity to stigmatize and disgrace them, as the Enemies of Mankind.

BUT it appears too evidently, that the noble Writer's *Spleen* arose from another Foundation. For his Satire is not so often

390 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
IX.

pointed against them, as being the *Enemies of Freedom*, as the *Friends of Christianity*. With a view of disgracing them in this Regard, he hath ridiculed and abused their *Writings*, their *Preaching*, and even their *Persons*. It will only be necessary to select a few Instances of this kind, from an infinite Number; in all which, the *Delicacy* of the *Raillery* is so *conspicuous*, as to need *no Illustration*.

In his *Soliloquy*, he hath paid his Compliments to the *Writings* of the *Clergy*, under the Title of “Candidates for Authorship of the sanctify’d Kind.” “These, he says, may be termed a sort of *Pseudo-Ascetics*, who can have no real Converse either with themselves or with Heaven”. — “And although the Books of this sort, by a common Idiom, are called *good Books*, the Authors for certain are a *sorry Race*” — “*A Saint-Author, of all Men, least values Politeness*. — He is above the Consideration of that, which in a narrow Sense, we call *Manners*: nor is he apt to examine any other Faults, than those which he calls *Sins*.”

^a *Solil.* Part i. § 1.

THUS

THUS he deals with the Clergy, when SECT.
IX.
they are *dull* enough to write *seriously* on
the most *interesting Subjects*. But if any
of the Order happens to fall into a gayer
turn of Composition, the Charge is re-
newed under another Form. Then, “the
“ *burlesque Divinity* grows mightily in
“ vogue; and the cry’d up Answers to He-
“ terodox Discourses are generally such as
“ are written in Drollery — Joy to the Re-
“ verend Authors, who can afford to be
“ thus gay, and condescend to correct us in
“ this *Lay-Wit*.”

THEIR *Preaching* is another standing Sub-
ject of Derision: and ridiculed they must
be, whether they *divide* their Discourse, or
divide it not. If the first, then the follow-
ing stroke of Raillery is prepar’d for them:
“ Come we now (as our *authentic Rhetori-*
“ *cians* express themselves) to our *second*
“ *Head*.” If the latter, then “our reli-
“ gious *Pastors* have changed their Manner
“ of distributing to us their *Spiritual Food*
“ —they have run into the more savory
“ way of *learned Ragout* and *Medley*. The
“ elegant Court-Divine exhorts in *Miscel-*

! *Misc.* v. c. 2.

! *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

392 *On Revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. “ *lany*, and is ashamed to bring his *two's*
“ and *three's* before a fashionable Assem-
“ bly.”

The *Defenders of Christianity* are baited in their Turn. “ For Example, let a
“ *zealous Divine* and *flaming Champion* of
“ our *Faith*, when inclined to shew him-
“ self in Print, make choice of some *tre-*
“ *mendous Mystery* of Religion, opposed
“ heretofore by some *damnable Heresiarch*”
— “ A Ring is made, and Readers gather
“ in Abundance. Every one takes Party
“ and encourages his own Side. ” *This*
“ *shall be my Champion ! — This Man for my*
“ *Money ! — Well hit on our Side ! — Again,*
“ *a good Stroke ! — There he was even with*
“ *him ! — Have at him next Bout ! — Ex-*
“ *cellent Sport !*”

The same *familiar Elegance* of Com-
position, joyned with a surprising Effort
in the noble Writer's *own Sublime*, runs
through the following Paragraph ; where
he compares a Controversy in *Divinity*, to
a Match at *Foot-Ball*. “ So have I known
“ a *crafty Glazier*, in time of Frost, pro-
“ cure a FOOT-BALL, to draw into the
“ Street the *emulous Chiefs* of the *robust*

‘ *Misc. ii. c. 3.*

“ *Misc. i. c. 2.*

“ *Youth.*

“*Youth. The tumid Bladder bounds at* SECT.
“*every KICK, bursts the withstanding* IX.
“*CASEMENTS, the Chaffys, Lanterns, and*
“*all the brittle vitreous WARE. The*
“*Noise of Blows and Out-cries fills the*
“*WHOLE NEIGHBOURHOOD; and the*
“*Ruins of Glass cover the stony Pavements:*
“*till the bloated battering Engine, subdued*
“*by Force of FOOT and FIST, and yield-*
“*ing up its Breath at many a fatal CRAN-*
“*NY, becomes lank and harmless, sinks*
“*in its Flight, and can no longer uphold*
“*the Spirit of the contending Parties”.*”

NOT content with these *severe Strokes* of Raillery, the noble Writer prepares a more deadly Blow at the Clergy; even no less than ruining their Fortunes among the *Fair-Sex*. And here the discerning Reader will readily guess, that his Ridicule must be needs levelled at their *Persons*. He introduces, or drags in, the Story of OTHELLO and DESDEMONA; represents the one as a *miraculous* Story-teller, the other as a *credulous* Hearer. He then adds,
“But why the Poet, amongst his *Greek*
“Names, should have chosen one which
“denoted the Lady *superstitious*, I can’t

” *Misc. i. c. 2.*

“*imagine;*

394 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. " imagine ; unless, as Poets are sometimes

IX. " Prophets too, he should figuratively, under this dark Type, have represented to us, that, about a hundred Years after his time, the Fair Sex of this Island should, by *other monstrous Tales*, be so seduced, as to turn their Favour chiefly on the *Tale-Tellers* ; and change their natural Inclination for fair, *candid*, and *courteous Knights*, into a Passion for a *mysterious Race of black Enchanters* ^x."

I CANNOT think this *elegant* Passage deserves a particular Reply. 'Tis supposed, the noble Writer designed it only as a Proof, " That the *Saint-Author* of all Men *least values Politeness* ;" as a Proof how *incapable* he was of *violating his own Rule*, or exercising any Degree of " that *gross* sort of " *Raillery*, which is so *offensive in good Company* ^y."

Indeed all the *delicate* Paragraphs here cited are much of the same nature ; and afford an undeniable Proof, how great a Master his Lordship was, in the true *refined* Manner of *Attic Wit*. I shall only add, that if, according to the noble Writer's projected Scheme of Confutation, the

^x *Solil.* Part ii. § 3. ^y *Wit. and H.* Part i. § 2.

English Clergy should ever be *baited* in the way of *Puppet-show* at *Bart'l'mew-Fair* ; I would recommend the above Passages, with many parallel ones in the *Characteristics*, to the Managers of the *Drama* ; as being admirably suited to the *Genius* of their wooden *DROLE*, whether he should chuse to *swagger* in the *Sock*, or *strut* in the *Buskin*.

SECT.
IX.

WERE the Clergy disposed to return these Compliments *in Kind*, it may be questioned whether his Lordship's Admirers would acquit them of *coarse Manners*. But however some of that Body may *blindly hate*, and others as *blindly admire* the Author of the *Characteristics* ; yet the best and wisest of the Profession, so far as I have been able to learn from their Conversation, would probably rather chuse to return his Salutations in the following Manner.

‘ Notwithstanding the superior Airs of
‘ *Contempt*, which on all Occasions your-
‘ Lordship is pleased to assume, we cannot
‘ think you of such Ability, as you seem to
‘ appear in your own Eyes : neither can we
‘ think this overweening Opinion of your
‘ self, this Disdain of all who adopt not
‘ your peculiar Tenets, is any Proof of
‘ real Wisdom, since yourself have taught us
to

396 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. ' to believe, " that as we grow *wiser*, we
 ' shall prove *less conceited*." Though we
 ' scorn to *revile* you, yet we judge our-
 ' selves *well intitled* to tell you *the Truth* on
 ' every Subject. We regard, therefore, a
 ' fine *Imagination*, an extensive *Knowledge*,
 ' and a commanding *Judgment*, as three
 ' Qualities independent of each other. In
 ' the first, we think you *eminent*; in the
 ' second, *considerable*; in the last, we must
 ' be excused, if we think you *neither emi-*
 ' *nent nor considerable*: And on this Account
 ' we can allot you *no high Rank*, in the Scale
 ' of *true Genius*. Suitable to this, your
 ' *Taste in Arts* is much superior to your
 ' *Talents for Philosophy*. The only *Chain*
 ' of *Reasoning* you have exhibited, is found
 ' in your *Enquiry concerning Virtue*: nor is
 ' even this fastened to the *Throne of Truth*,
 ' but hangs trembling from a *shadowy* and
 ' *aerial* Fabric, blown up by a sportive
 ' Imagination. You have indeed obtained
 ' the Character of an *original Writer* in *Pbi-*
 ' *losophy*: how little you deserve this must
 ' needs be known to all who are versed in
 ' the *Greek Schools*; for thence the *rational*
 ' *Part* of your System is chiefly drawn.
 ' What you *borrow*, you often *embellish*,
 ' some-

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 397

‘ times *disguise*, never *strengthen*: but SECT.
IX.
‘ when you attempt to become *original*,
‘ you only convince us how ill qualified
‘ you are for such a Task. Accordingly,
‘ we find in the general turn of your Writ-
‘ ings, *meagre Sentiments* studiously adorned
‘ by a *glare of Words*, and a *waste of Ima-*
‘ *gery*: with these you amuse the common
‘ Reader; like the unqualified Painter, who,
‘ unable to reach the Beauties of a just and
‘ *vigorous Expression*, covers a lifeless Fi-
‘ gure with *gaudy Draperies*. And we
‘ cannot but think, that had you studied the
‘ Writings of that great and excellent Man
‘ whom you so weakly deride^r, your Vo-
‘ lumes, whatever they had lost in *Bulk*,
‘ would have gained in *weight* and *splendor*.

‘ With regard to the Buffoonries, which
‘ you have occasionally exercised on Chri-
‘ stianity, in what you call “ your Random
“ Essays;” they are so much below the
‘ Character of *the Philosopher*, that it is
‘ matter of Surprise to us, that you could
‘ think they can become the *Man of Wit*.
‘ It is true, among those whom you most
‘ despise, the *mere Vulgar*, they have gained
‘ you the Character of an *inimitable* Author;

‘ *Mr. Locke*. See Advice, &c. Part iii. § 1.

I

‘ among

398 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. ‘ among Readers of that Rank “ who are

“ ready to swallow any low Drollery or
 “ Jest ;” among those whom you have else-
 ‘ where described, “ who, while they pre-
 “ tend to such a Scrutiny of other Evidences,
 “ are the readiest to take the Evidence of
 “ the greatest Deceivers in the World, *their*
 “ *own Passions*.” But whatever these
 ‘ Passages may be in their *Consequences*, we
 ‘ cannot but think them, in their own *Na-*
 ‘ *ture*, even *contemptible*. For, to use your
 ‘ own *Attic Phrase*, “ to *twitch, snap, snub*
 “ up, or *banter*, to torture *Sentences* and
 “ *Phrases*, and turn a *few Expressions* into
 “ *Ridicule*, is not sufficient to constitute
 “ what is properly esteemed a *Writer*.”
 ‘ On this Account we look upon these
 ‘ boasted Passages in your Book, to be of
 ‘ that Kind which are calculated only “ to
 “ *create Diversion* to those who look no fur-
 “ ther^b ;” and in which, as you elsewhere
 ‘ observe, “ the most *confused Head*, if
 “ *fraught with a little Invention*, and pro-
 “ vided with *Common-Place-Book Learning*,
 “ may exert itself to as much Advantage,
 “ as the most *orderly and well-settled Judg-*
 “ *ment*.” We cannot therefore express any

^a *Mor. P. ii. § 1.* ^a *Misc. v. c. 2.* ^b *Misc. i. c. 1.* ^c *Ibid.*

‘ Esteem

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 399

‘ Esteem either for the *Scurrilities* of the SECT.
‘ *coarse* JESTER, or the *trim Delicacy* and IX.
‘ *Self-Admiration* of the literary NARCIS-
‘ SUS.

‘ BUT, *my Lord*, there lies a heavier
‘ Charge against you, than that of *bad Writ-*
‘ *ing*. We mean, the *Indecency* and *Immo-*
‘ *rality* of your *Conduct*, in your *Manner* of
‘ attacking *Christianity*. You would be
‘ thought a *Lover* of your *Country*; yet
‘ you pour *Contempt* upon its *Laws* and *In-*
‘ *stitutions*. You allow the *Propriety* of a
‘ *religious Establishment*; yet you take every
‘ Occasion to *deride* it. You contend for a
‘ *public Leading* in Religion; yet you per-
‘ petually insinuate, that Mankind are *led by*
‘ *the Nose*. You say, “ The *Public* ought
“ not to be *insulted to its Face*,” yet your
‘ Writings are one *continued Insult* upon its
‘ *Opinions*. Our excellent and unrivaled
‘ Constitution allows a perfect *Freedom* of
‘ *Enquiry*; had you then argued *ingenuously*
‘ *ly* and *fairly* against *Christianity*, without
‘ attempting *Ridicule*; whatever Opinion
‘ we might have entertained of your *Head*,
‘ we might at least have thought favourably
‘ of your *Heart*. But in direct Opposition
‘ to this Rule, you always *ridicule*, scarce
‘ ever

400 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. ' ever *argue* ; you endeavour to instil *illegal*

' *Opinions*, without bringing any Evidence
' to support either their *Usefulness* or *Truth* :
' You give these *crude Buffoonries* to the
' World in *Print* ; and is not this *insulting*
' *the Public to its Face* ? — In this Instance,
' we must think you *a bad Citizen* ; and to
' be ranked among those, whom a Writer,
' by no Means prejudiced in Favour of Re-
' ligion, thus justly stigmatizes : “ Who, I
“ hardly know for what End, have written
“ against the Religion of their Country ;
“ and without pretending to substitute any
“ thing better, or more practicable, in its
“ Place, would deprive us of our happy
“ Establishment, merely, as it should seem,
“ for the Pleasure of pulling down and do-
“ ing Mischief.” Besides this, *my Lord*,
' we must take the Liberty to say, that you
' betray such frequent Marks of *Insincerity*
' and *designed Misrepresentation* in your
' Treatment of *Christianity*, as but ill con-
' sists with that *Reverence* which you owe to
' *Truth* and to *yourself* ; such as becomes
' not *a MAN*, much less a *Man* whom
' the Public consent hath distinguished by
' the Title of RIGHT HONOURABLE.

' *Enquiry into Homer's Life and Writings*, § 6.

' WHAT

‘ WHAT your particular Motives may have SECT.
IX.
‘ been to this Treatment of *Christianity*, you
‘ best know. The most *excusable Tempta-*
‘ *tion* to this strange Conduct, that we can
‘ assign, must have been the *natural Preva-*
‘ *lence of Spleen*. For, as you observe, “all
‘ *splenetic* People have a necessary Propen-

‘ sity to Criticism and Satire.” — “The
‘ Spirit of Satire rises with the *ill Mood*; and
‘ the chief Passion of Men thus *diseased* and
‘ thrown out of good *Humour*, is to find *Fault*,
‘ *censure, unravel, confound*, and leave no-
‘ thing without *Exception and Controversy*.”
‘ FAR be it from us to derogate from your
‘ *private Virtues*; tho’ we cannot but wish,
‘ that in your Treatment of *Christianity*, you
‘ had given better Proofs of that *universal Cha-*
‘ *rity*, which you so *warmly profess*; even
‘ while you are reviling *that Religion* where
‘ alone it is to be found. — There is another
‘ Circumstance, that sure the more humane
‘ Part of your Admirers would hesitate up-
‘ on; we mean, that *extreme Contempt* you
‘ express for those you call the *mere Vulgar*.
‘ Your Regard seems solely centered in esta-
‘ blishing your *peculiar System* among those
‘ you call “Men of *Fashion and Breeding* ;”

† *Misc.* ii. c. 3.

402 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT.
IX.

‘ while you give up *the Vulgar*, that is (to
‘ speak with due Reverence of the Works
‘ of GOD) the Bulk of your *Fellow-Crea-*
‘ *tures*, as a proper Prey to the supposed De-
‘ lusions and Tyranny of those, whom you
‘ brand as the Enemies of Mankind. How
‘ this *Contempt* for the greatest Part of your
‘ *Species* can consist with true *Virtue* or
‘ *Charity*, we are at a Loss to comprehend.
‘ ’Tis certain, *Christianity* would have taught
‘ you otherwise. Nay, *my Lord*, a great
‘ *Roman*, as much your Superior in *Station*,
‘ as in *Genius* and *active Virtue*, would have
‘ told you, “ that true Goodness extends it-
“ self to the *Multitude*; that *Virtue* is not
“ disdainful or proud; but regards all Ranks
“ of Men, and consults their Welfare;
“ which it could not do, if it *despised the*
“ *Vulgar*.” *Christianity* hath nobly
‘ heightened this Principle; and recom-
‘ mends the *Weak*, the *Poor*, the *Ignorant*,
‘ as the proper Objects not only of our *Cha-*
‘ *rity*, but *Instruction*. And however mor-
‘ tifying it may be to proud Minds, we must
‘ say, that we frequently meet with Men
‘ in the lower Ranks of Life, sometimes
‘ even in *Cities*, often in *Cottages*, who when

& Cicero, *Lael.*

in-

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 403

‘ *instructed* in the Principles of true *Christi-* SECT.
‘ *anity*, are superior in *Knowledge*, *Worth*, IX.
‘ and *Happiness*, to those who hold them in
‘ Contempt.

‘ WITH Regard to your Treatment of
‘ *ourselves*: It gives us no Concern. For
‘ in one Word, Calumnies thrown on whole
‘ Bodies of Men, are *unmeaning* and *self-*
‘ *confuted*. “ You may therefore proceed
“ in your *Invectives*; bestowing as free
“ Language of that Kind, as your *Charity*
“ and superior *Breeding* will permit. You
“ may liberally deal your *courtly Compliments*
“ and *Salutations* in what Dialect you think
“ fit; since for our own Part, neither the
“ the Names of *Bigots*, *Impostors*, *Pedants*,
“ *Formalists*, *Gladiatorian Penmen*, *Flaming*
“ *Champions of the Faith*, *Black Tribe*, or
“ *Black Enchanters*^h, will in the least scan-
“ dalize us, while the Sentence comes only
“ from *the Enemies of our Master*. On the
“ contrary, we rather strive with ourselves
“ to suppress whatever Vanity might natu-
“ rally arise in us, from such Favour be-
“ stow’d. For whatever may, in the Bot-
“ tom, be intended us, by such a Treatment,

^h Names bestowed on the English Clergy throughout
the *Characteristics*.

404 *On Revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. " 'tis impossible for us to term it other than

" *Favour* ; since there are certain *Enmities*,
 " which it will be ever esteemed a real Ho-
 " nour *to have merited*ⁱ."

' You have indeed wisely and artfully
 ' endeavoured to *intimidate* us from expof-
 ' ing the Folly of your *Insults* on *Religion*
 ' and *Christianity* ; by representing such an
 ' Attempt as being in itself *Contemptible*.
 ' For thus you are pleased to speak : " It
 " must be own'd, that when a Writer of
 " any Kind is so *confiderable* as to deserve
 " the Labour and Pains of some *shrewd*
 " *Heads* to refute him in Public, he may, in
 " the Quality of an *Author*, be juſtly congra-
 " tulated on that Occaſion. 'Tis ſuppoſed
 " neceſſarily, that he muſt have writ with
 " ſome kind of *Ability* or *Wit*^k."

' To obviate this Remark, is the only fur-
 ' ther Trouble we ſhall give your Lordſhip
 ' on the preſent Occaſion. And here without
 ' any particular Application to yourſelf, we
 ' muſt beg Leave to offer the plain Reason
 ' why we think your Obſervation, however
 ' plauſible and commonly received, is yet
 ' entirely groundleſs. Indeed, with regard
 ' to Writings of mere *Speculation* or *Criti-*
 ' *cism*, which affect not the Happineſs of

ⁱ See *Misc.* v. c. 3.

^k *Misc.* i. c. 2.

On revealed Religion and Christianity. 405

‘ Mankind, “ if Authors write ill they are
‘ “ despised” and forgotten. At least, as SECT.
IX.
‘ the *Satirist* observes, they ought to be so¹:
‘ And on this Account, many Parts of the
‘ *Characteristics* will, probably, pass for ever
‘ *uncensured* by us.

‘ BUT there are other Kinds of bad
‘ Writing, which will ever bid fair to *live*
‘ and be *admired*. We mean, such as *mini-*
‘ *ster* to the *low Passions* and *Vices* of Man-
‘ kind; among which, RIDICULE on RE-
‘ LIGION is of all others the most favourite
‘ Topic. And even where these Affections
‘ do not prevail, the generality of Men, thro’
‘ the Weakness of Nature, are easily misled
‘ in Matters even of the nearest Concern-
‘ ment, by *Sophistry* or *Buffoonry*; by a
‘ *Hint*, a *Sarcasm*, or an *Allusion*. Now in
‘ this Case, ’tis surely a proper and *rational*,
‘ tho’ perhaps no *easy* Task, to *detect Misre-*
‘ *presentation*, and lead Mankind back again
‘ to the Paths of *Truth* and *Happiness*. For
‘ the Effects of *Ridicule* on the *Mind*, re-
‘ semble those of *Venom* on the *Body*; which,

¹ *Quel Demon vous irrite, & vous porte à medire?*

Un Livre vous deplait : Qui vous force à le lire?

Laissez mourir un Fat dans son Obscurité.

Un Auteur ne peut il pourrir en Sureté?

Boileau, *Sat.* ix.

‘ tho’

406 *On revealed Religion and Christianity.*

SECT. IX. ' tho' struck into the Blood by a *puny Rep-*
 ' tile, may yet demand, nay even baffle the
 ' Power of the *strongest Medicines*. How
 ' then can you affirm that an Effect of this
 ' Kind "*implies either Ability or Wit,*" if
 ' Buffoonry and Sophistry can do the Busi-
 ' ness? And that they *may*, we have your
 ' Lordship's *full Acknowledgment*; for, to
 ' adopt and conclude with your own Ex-
 ' pression, " In the same Manner as a *ma-*
 " *licious CENSURE, craftily worded and*
 " pronounced with *Assurance*, is apt to pass
 " with Mankind for *shrewd WIT*; so a
 " *virulent (or a visionary) MAXIM*, in bold
 " Expressions, tho' without any *Justness* of
 " Thought, is readily received for *true PHI-*
 " *LOSOPHY* ^m."

^m *Moralists*, P. ii. § 5.

F I N I S.



E R R A T A.

Page 65. l. 6. for *emerge* read *immerge*. P. 336. l. pen-
 ult. for *enjoying* read *enjoining*.

